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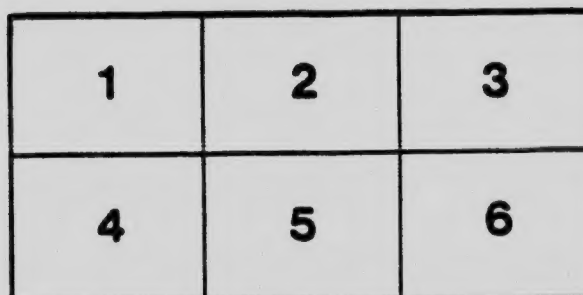
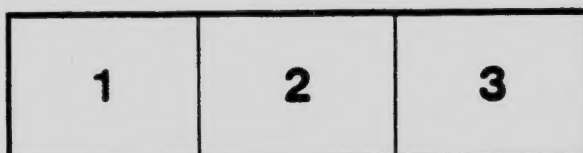
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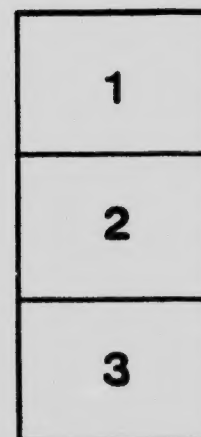
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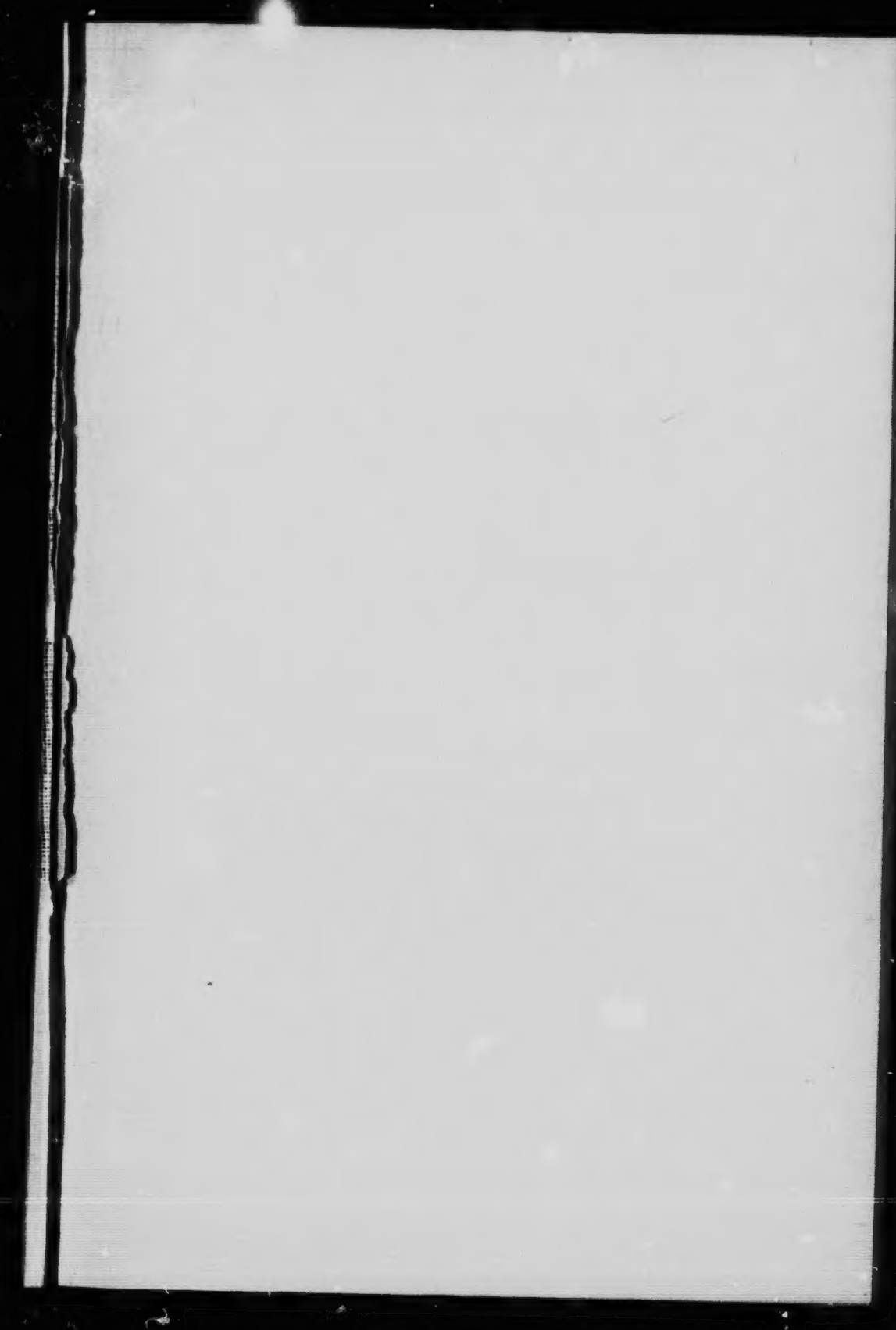
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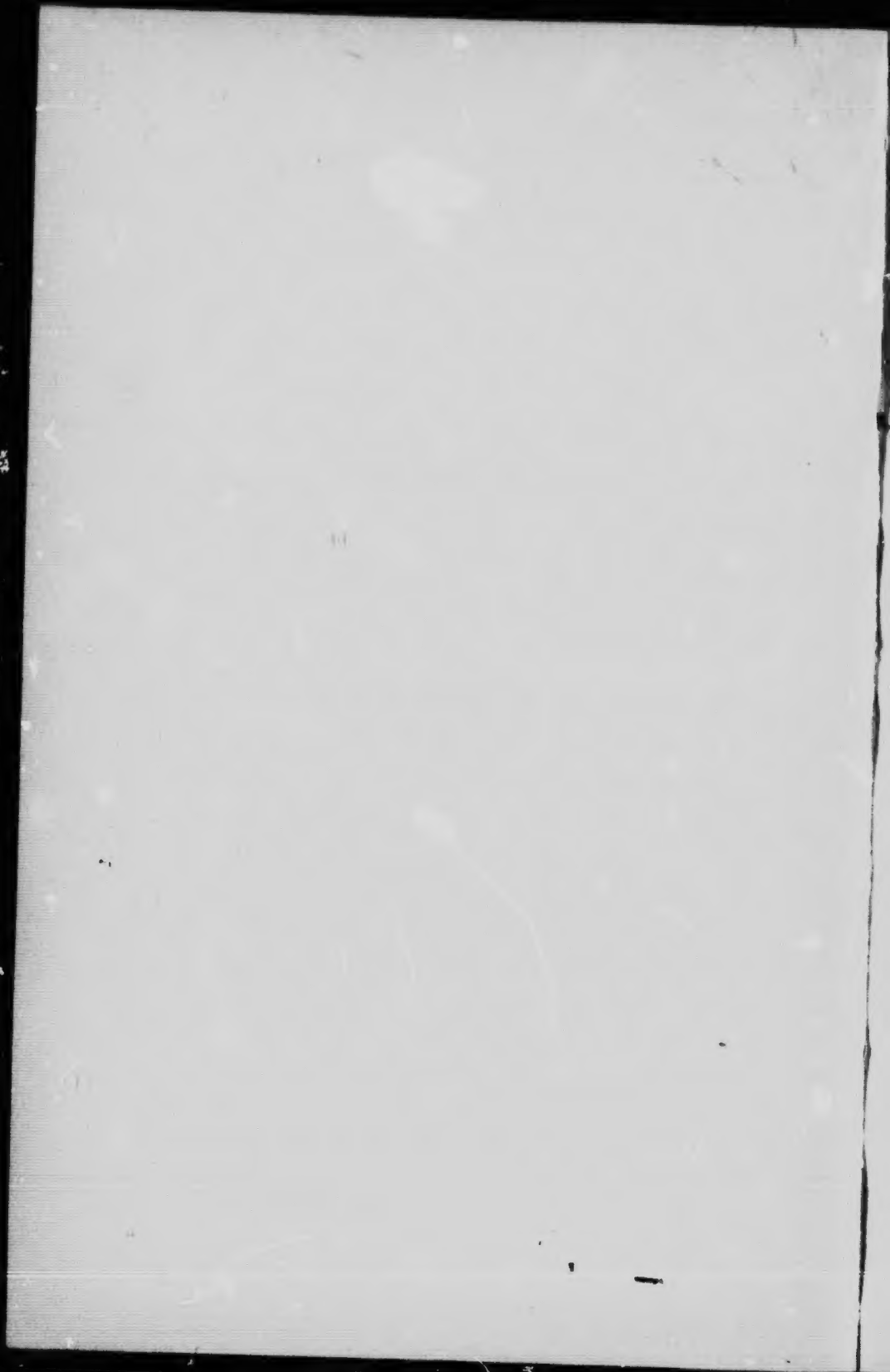
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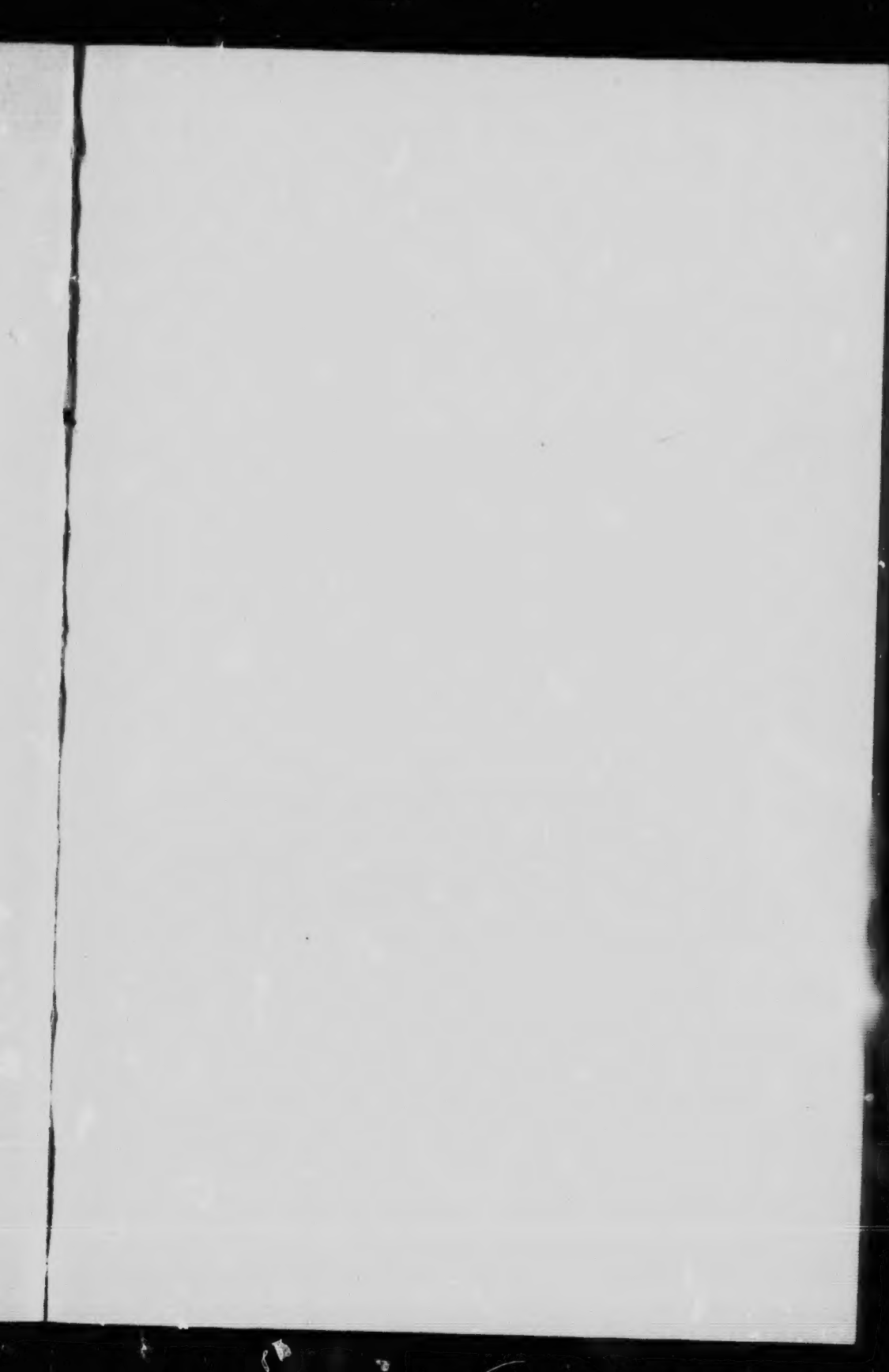
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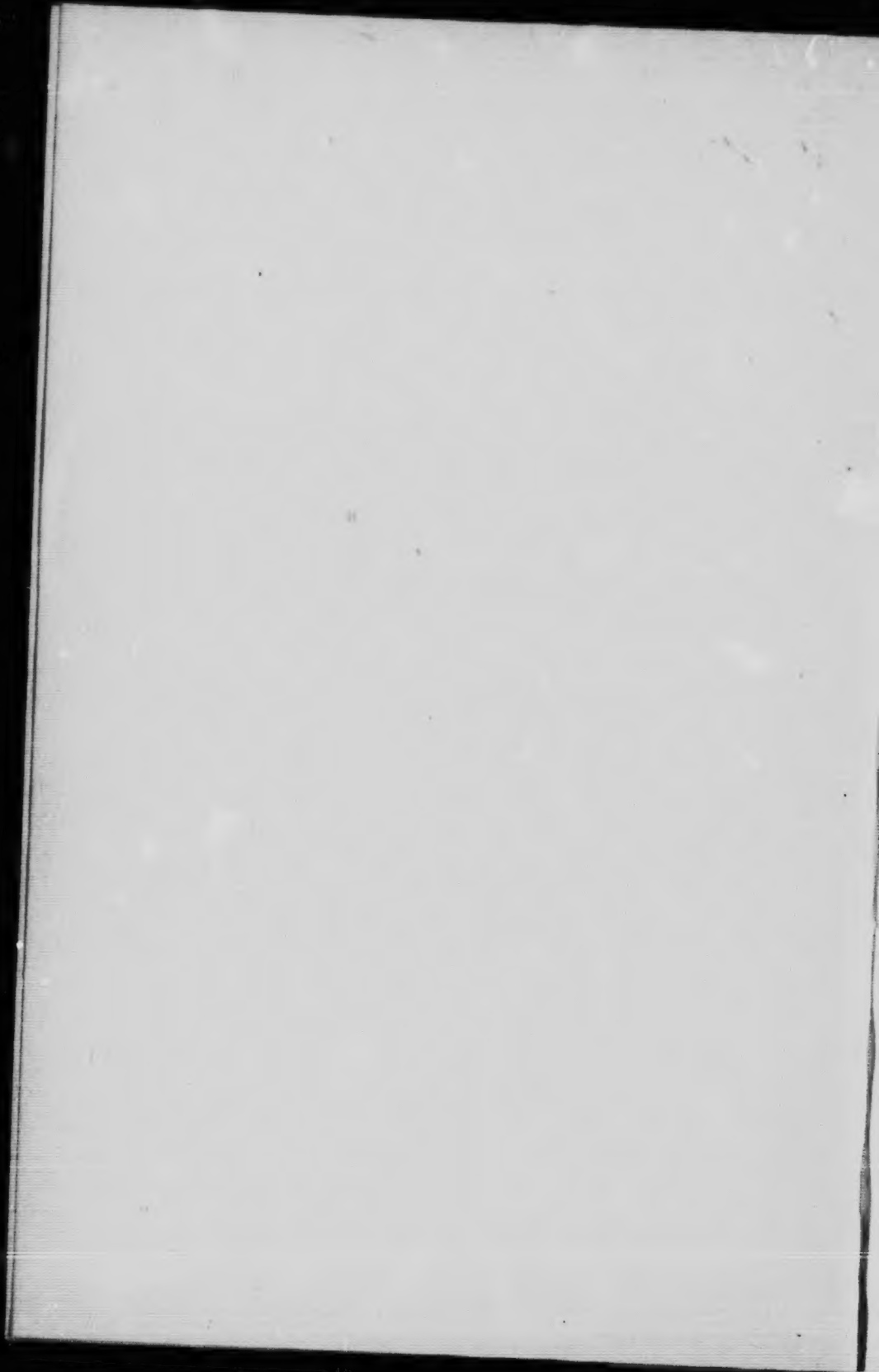
















ALFRED TENNYSON.

W. Scott.

W. J. Gage & Co.'s Educational Series.

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Sept. 1903.

SELECT POEMS  
OF  
ALFRED TENNYSON

WITH MEMOIR,  
INTRODUCTION AND ANNOTATIONS

EDITED BY

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SKETCH OF TENNYSON'S LIFE



### PREFACE TO THE SKETCH.

The following sketch is taken largely from the Memoir of Alfred Lord Tennyson, written by his son—a work that must ever remain the standard biography and the basis of all studies of the poet's life. And the study of Tennyson's life is a help to the study of his works, in a more marked degree perhaps than in the case of any other great poet. Happily, that life is in itself a poem of the noblest kind, and one to teach us how to make our lives sublime. It is the present writer's hope that the sons and daughters of this "True North" that Tennyson loved may feel the charm of his character and the inspiration of his example.



### SKETCH OF TENNYSON'S LIFE.

ALFRED TENNYSON was born at Somersby, Lincolnshire, on Sunday, August 6th, 1809.\* His father, the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson, was Rector of the parish and at the same time Rector of Wood Enderby, Incumbent of Benniworth and Vicar of Great Grimsby. His mother was a daughter of the Rev. Stephen Fytche, Vicar of Louth. Alfred was the fourth of a family of twelve children, eight boys and four girls. The eldest of these children died in infancy—the others all lived to a good old age, most of them up to and beyond the three-score years and ten.

For generations the Tennysons had held positions of importance, and the influences of heredity were evident in the sweetness and light and strength that marked the children of the Rectory. These natural qualities were stimulated and developed by the examples and training of their home. The father was a man of extraordinary strength and stature, and of superior intellectual powers and scholarly attainments. His social qualities were brilliant and attractive, and his affections tender. He was, however, at times so overcome of brooding melancholy as to inspire his children with fear. Happily, the sweet and constant spirit of the wife and mother made up for the fits of gloom that overcame the father. Alfred

\* So the Memoir states, but the baptismal register reads: "August 8. Alfred, son of George Clayton and Elizabeth Tennyson, baptized, born August 5th." See Rawnsley's "Memories of the Tennysons," page 12. He was born just before midnight of the 5th.

Tennyson described her as "One of the most angelick natures on God's earth, always doing good as it were by a divine intuition." She is the original of Tennyson's "Isabel," and in the "Princess" the great poet thus glorifies the influence of the mother on her son :—

"Happy he  
With such a mother ' faith in womankind  
Beats in his blood, a d trust in all things high  
Comes easy to him, and, tho' he trip and fall,  
He shall not blind his soul with clay."

The plain living of the Rectory was good for the bodies of the Tennyson children, and the household fountains of thought and feeling and imagination nourished their spirits so that they "lisp'd in numbers," and their play was of knights and councillors and kings.

After the first teachings of the home and of the village school, Alfred was sent, at seven years of age, to the grammar school at Louth, where he lived with his grandmother, the widow of the late vicar. Till his eleventh year he remained at this school with apparently but little profit or pleasure. "How I did hate that school!" he said in after life. "The only good I ever got from it was the memory of the words '*sonus desiliantis aquæ*,' and of an old wall covered with wild weeds opposite the school windows." In 1820 he returned to the better instruction of his father, who gave him and his brothers all they ever learnt of languages, fine art, mathematics and natural science until they went to the university. And they were taught not only to read, but to observe and think. Alfred had an eye for the wild flowers and the birds. He would watch the stars by night with shepherd, and when within reach of the coast would run bareheaded to look upon the "hollow ocean ridges," and the "interminable

waves rolling along interminable shores of sand." Many of his early observations and reflections were recorded by the lad in prose or rhyme, and when the late Master of Balliol saw these writings he said, "They are most original, and it is wonderful how the whelp could have known such things."

In 1827 Alfred and his brother Charles published a small volume entitled "Poems by Two Brothers." The book was printed by Jackson of Louth, and the boys were to receive for it the sum of £20, one-half of which was to be taken out in books. It was a great triumph for them, and they celebrated it in a characteristic and becoming way. "We hired a conveyance," said Charles Tennyson Turner,\* "and drove off for the day, and shouted ourselves hoarse on the shore as we rolled out poem by poem in one another's ears. I think if any one had met us they would have thought us out of our minds, and, in a way, I think that day we were indeed beside ourselves for joy."

In 1828 the two brothers matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge. The regular university studies were at that time distasteful to Alfred. "They were," he said, "so uninteresting, so much matter of fact. None but dry headed, angular little gentlemen can take much delight in them." This first impression of university teaching and teachers was repeated later in these verses:—

"Your manner sorts  
Not with this age wherefrom ye stand apart,  
Because the lips of little chi'dren preach  
Against you, you that do profess to teach,  
And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart."

\*Charles Tennyson took on the name *Turner* with an inheritance from an uncle.

But, in spite of its limitations and shortcomings, the university became very dear to Tennyson, because he found in its society the very thing he most needed and desired. Amongst university students will always be found many of the choice spirits of the age, and the leaders and makers of the age to come. Too often university men fail to profit by the inspiration and example of the best minds, either by giving way to the habits of the book-worm and recluse, or by the thoughtless entertainment of "each new-hatched, unfledged comrade." Alfred Tennyson found the centre about which were gathered the finest minds of the university at that time. It was a students' club or society, called the "Apostles." Here they took counsel together over all the great questions that stirred the thought of England in that age of eager intellectual and moral awakening.

" We held debate, a band  
Of youthful friends, on mind and art  
And labour and the changing mart,  
And all the framework of the land."

Tennyson was a member of this society. So, too, were such men of note in later days as Lord Stanley, Lord Houghton, Bishop Thirwald, Dean Alford, Archbishop Trench, Henry and Edmund Lushington, and the one most loved and honoured by Tennyson, Arthur Hallam, son of the historian. This young man was held in the highest esteem, not only by Tennyson, but also by others, such as Gladstone, who were good judges of men. They spoke of him as one of the noblest and most gifted of mortals, one who came as near to perfection as was possible to man. It was in this goodly fellowship that Tennyson found the intellectual light and warmth that he

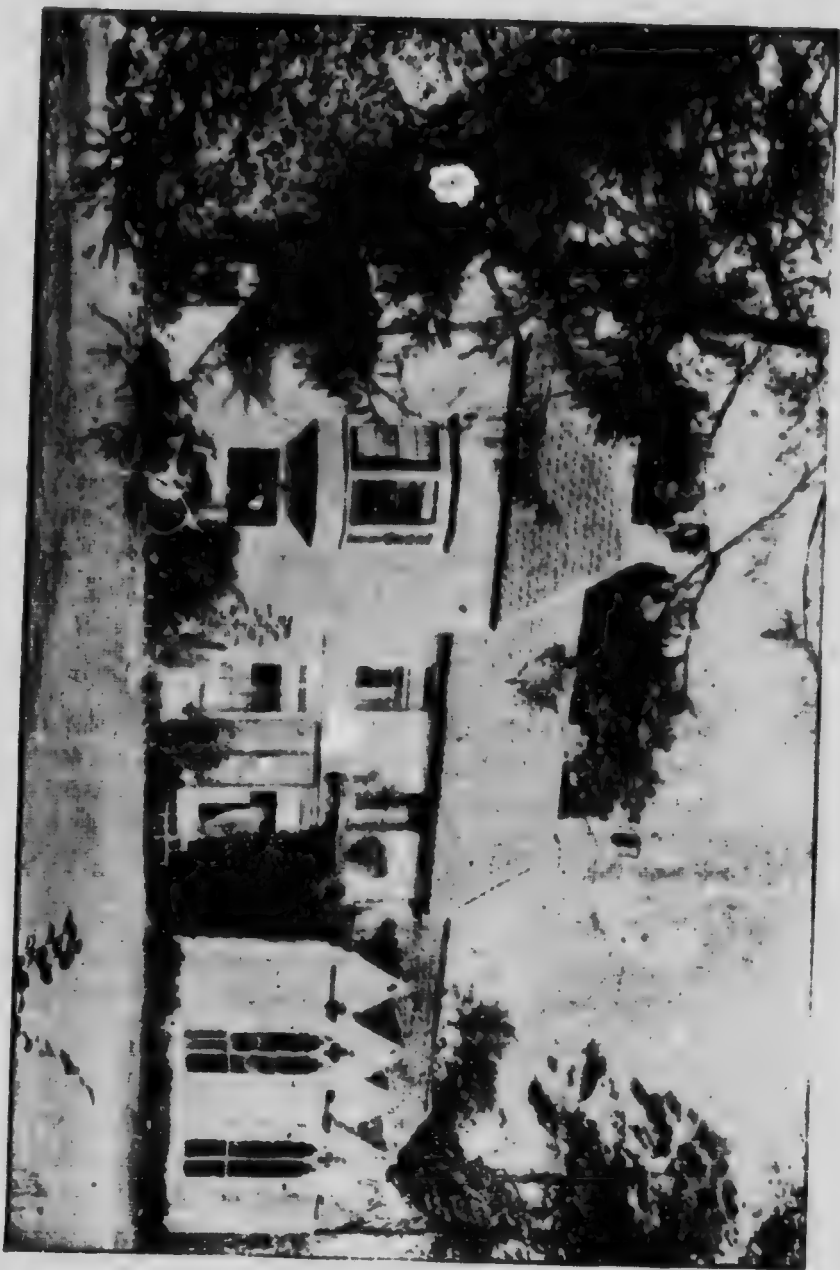
could not find in the common academic life and work ; and it was here that his own genius was exercised and developed. His friend Arthur Hallam was the first to predict the fame that Tennyson would achieve in literature. There is pathetic interest in the fact that the poem through which Tennyson was recognized as the great poet of the nineteenth century was the *In Memoriam*, his tribute to the memory of Arthur Hallam, his dearest college friend and the accepted lover of his sister, Emily Tennyson.

In addition to his academic studies and the studies and discussions of the Apostles' Society, he diligently cultivated his poetic art. This led to his chief, if not his only, academic distinction, the Chancellor's prize medal for a poem on Timbuctoo. Discerning critics declared that this poem contained the best poetic promise of the time, and Arthur Hallam said, "The splendid imaginative power that pervades it will be seen through all hindrances. I consider Tennyson as promising fair to be the greatest poet of our generation, perhaps of our century."

In 1830 Tennyson published his first volume. It was called "Poems, Chiefly Lyrical." The volume did not attract much attention. In the same year he visited Spain in company with his friend Hallam. Their object was to bring financial aid to the revolutionists of that land. No record was kept of the business. The revolutionists met with complete disaster, and some English sympathizers, taken with them, were executed at Malaga. Fortunately our poet and his friend escaped such a fate, and Tennyson had, further, a great gain from the expedition, in that his imagination was permanently impressed by the and grandeur of the great mountain scenery of the Pyrenees.

In February, 1831, Tennyson left Cambridge on the illness of his father, who died the following month. The family remained in the rectory till 1837. Alfred did not return to the university or read for a degree, but he gave himself to his chosen work as poet. He lived quietly, but his life was brightened by meetings with Hallam and other old college friends. His second volume, "*Poems by Alfred Tennyson*," was published in 1832. It contained poems marked by the immaturities and extravagances usual in young poets of vigour, such as overcrowded imagery and "over-indulgence in the luxuries of the senses." As their manner is, or was, the critics fastened on these things, and held them and the author up to ridicule. But there were some who saw and proclaimed the excellent qualities of the new poetry and the promise it gave of a rich harvest when the time of ripeness should come. One such critic noted the improvement since the volume of 1830: "Not only was the aim generally larger, the subjects and interest more substantial, and the endeavour more sustained, but the original and distinctive character of the man appeared more plainly, — the moral soul was beginning more and more to assume its due prominence, not in the way of formal preaching (the proper vehicle of which is prose), but in the shape and colour which his creations unconsciously took, and the feelings which they were made insensibly to suggest."

Tennyson felt keenly the harshness, and in some particulars the injustice, of the adverse criticisms. He had apparently inherited something of his father's tendency to brood over a wrong. Writing about this time to a relative, he said of her little boy: "I hope for his own peace of mind that he will have as little of the Tennyson



SOMERSET HISTORY.



about him as possible." In later life he used to say, "I am black-blooded, like all the Tennysons. I remember all the malignant things said against me, but little of the praise." The bad reception of his poems must have been a great trial to a man of this temper, but it was closely followed by a still greater sorrow, the loss of his dearest friend, Arthur Hallam, who died suddenly at Vienna on the 15th of September, 1833. It was a time to test the man, and he stood the test. As the storm shows the qualities of a good ship, so it was the stress of disappointment and bereavement that revealed the strength and largeness of Tennyson's nature. We learn in the "Two Voices," dated 1833, in the first edition, how he met and vanquished the spirit of despair. He knew it was his "vice of blood," and he "crushed it on the threshold of the mind." The old Hebrew poet records a similar victory, where he exclaims, "Then I said, this is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." Instead of abandoning in petulance the hope of winning the ear of England, he gave ten long years to the cultivation of his art, so that when, in 1842, he published his poems in two volumes, he was received with acclaim, not only by the people of England, but by all in every land who speak the tongue of Milton and of Shakespeare. Wordsworth, the aged poet-laureate, declared that Tennyson was "decidedly the first of our living poets," and the voice of Wordsworth was the voice of England.

The volumes of 1842 laid the foundation of Tennyson's literary fame, but he was a poor man. He and his affairs are thus sketched by Mrs. Carlyle, in a letter written at that time: "Besides, he is a very handsome man and a

noble-hearted one, with something of the gipsy in his appearance, which for me is perfectly charming. Babbie never saw him, unfortunately, or perhaps I should say fortunately, for she must have fallen in love with him on the spot, unless she be made absolutely of ice; and then men of genius have never anything to keep wives upon." The low ebb in his affairs, however, was now past, and the tide of his fortune began to flow. At the suggestion of Richard Milnes, afterwards Lord Houghton, the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel, put him on the pension list for £200. In his letter announcing the news to Tennyson, Sir Robert said: "I rejoice that you have enabled me to fulfil the intention of Parliament, by advising the Crown to confer a mark of royal favour on one who has devoted to worthy purposes great intellectual powers." These graceful words now seem to express a self-evident truth, but the act of patronage was not pleasing to all the literary men of England. It was publicly denounced by Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, at the instigation of conscientious convictions or of the *odium literarium*. We are not anxious to excuse the Prime Minister for his recognition of "the first of our living poets," but if an advocate were needed, no better could be found than the stern moralist, Carlyle. Milnes urged one day, as an excuse for delay in procuring the pension, "What will my constituents say if I do get the pension for Tennyson? They know nothing about him or his poetry, and they will probably think he is some poor relation of my own, and that the whole affair is a job." But Carlyle solemnly replied: "Richard Milnes, on the Day of Judgment, when the Lord asks you why you didn't get that pension for Alfred Tennyson, it will not do to lay the blame on your constituents; it is *you* that will be damned!"

The year 1850 was the golden year in the life of Tennyson. In that year he published the *In Memoriam*, and three editions were called for before the year was out. In June of 1850 he married Emily Sellwood. For fourteen years he had loved her, but since 1840 he had been obliged through lack of means to release her from her promise and seem to give up the hope of making her his wife. But now the way was open again to the cherished hope, and Tennyson said, "The peace of God came into my life before the altar when I wedded her." The third notable event in the year 1850 was his appointment to the position of poet-laureate left vacant by the death of Wordsworth.

From 1850 to his death in 1892, Tennyson lived in ever-growing prosperity and honour. His domestic life was most happy, and it proves, as the lives of Wordsworth and Browning also prove, that great literary genius is not incompatible with those qualities of heart and judgment that ensure domestic joy. For about three years after his marriage he lived at Twickenham, near London, where his eldest son, Hallam,\* was born in 1852. In 1853 Tennyson took possession of his Farringford home at Freshwater, Isle of Wight. Here his second son, Lionel,† was born in 1854. For forty years Farringford remained the home of the Tennysons and a centre of all light and sweetness. It is thus described by Mrs. Thackeray Ritchie: "The house at Farringford itself seemed like a charmed palace, with green walls without and speaking walls within. There hung Dante, with his solemn nose

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\*The present Lord Tennyson, Governor-General of Australia.

†Lionel Tennyson died in 1886, on his way home from India. He was buried in the Red Sea.

and wreath; Italy gleamed over the doorways; friends' faces lined the passages, books filled the shelves, and a glow of crimson was everywhere; the oriel drawing-room window was full of green and golden leaves, of the sound of birds and of the distant sea." In 1868, on Shakespeare's birthday, April 23, Tennyson laid the foundation of a new summer home at Aldworth, Surrey. In the summer of 1869 he went to live there, but for many years he spent the winter and spring at his old home in the Isle of Wight.

In his social life Tennyson was as highly privileged as he was happy in his domestic life. He had always disliked and shunned society in the common sense of the word, but he always loved and sought good company, and at Farringford and Aldworth he was the host of all who were most distinguished in letters and art and science. And what is to all Englishmen the greatest social privilege, he received neighbourly visits from the Prince Consort and the Princess Louise, and was from time to time the guest of the Queen at Osborne and Windsor. In 1855 the University of Oxford conferred its highest honour upon him, and in 1883 he accepted the peerage offered to him by the Queen. Lest it should be supposed, however, that only the great were welcomed by Alfred Tennyson, the following words of Aubrey de Vere will show how the lowly as well as the great were drawn to him: "The entire simplicity and unconventionality of Alfred Tennyson was part of the charm which bound his friends to him. No acquaintance, however inferior to him in intellect, could be afraid of him. He felt that he was not in the presence of a critic, but one who respected human nature." Another friend who knew him well writes: "His judgments of men were wonderfully

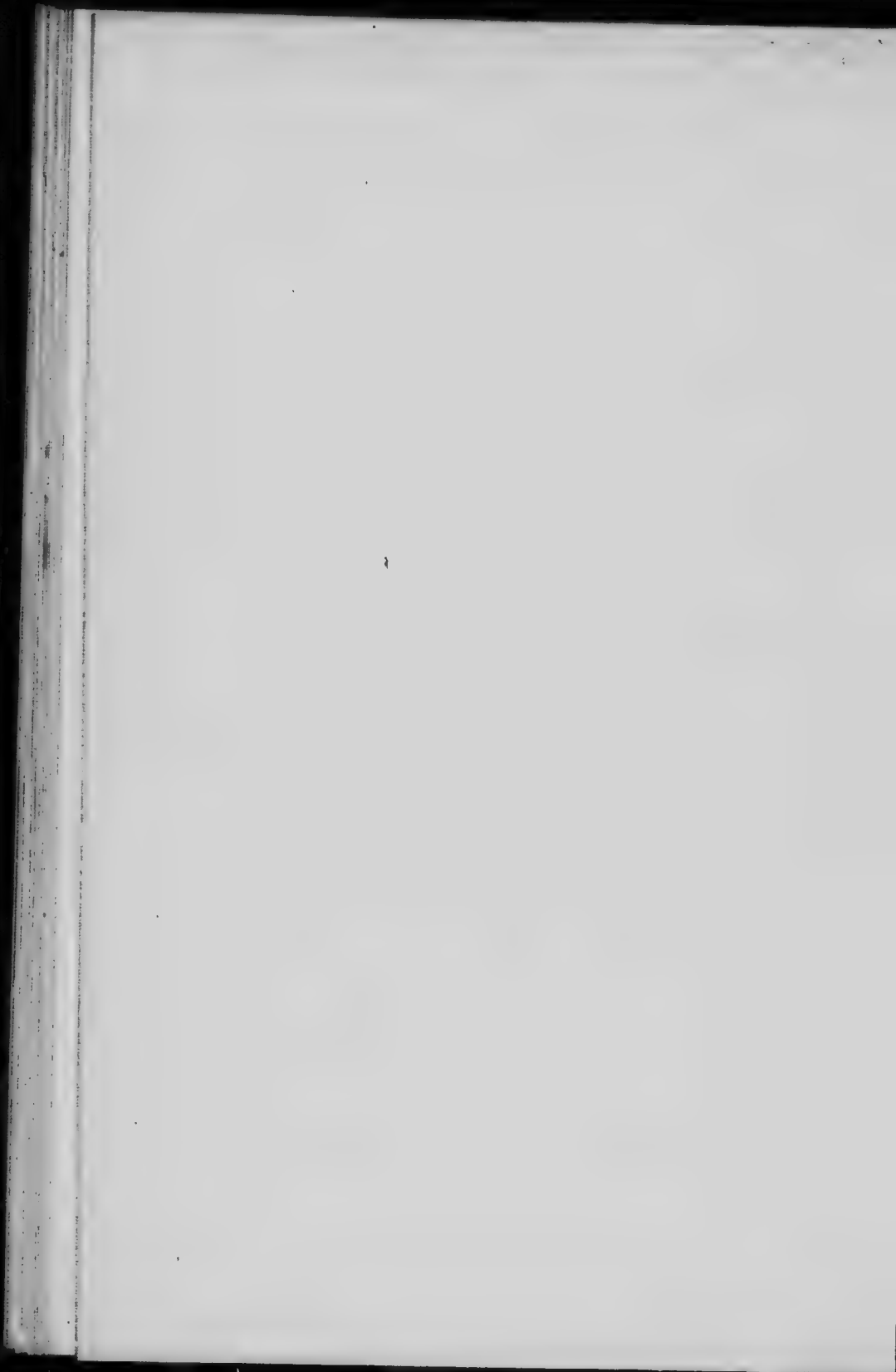
kindly. He had a refreshing hatred of the common-places of intercourse and a mistrust of what he called the 'humbug of society,' which made him dread ever attending anything in the shape of a party; but to visitors in his own house he showed ideal hospitality, giving his friends a feeling that they had come to a home indeed, bestowing *himself* upon them in a way which the most genial of the earth alone understand."

The death of Tennyson was beautiful and noble as his life had been. It took place at Aldworth on the 6th of October, 1892. His last hour is thus described with touching simplicity in the memoir written by his son: "He had been talking to Dr. Dabbs about death, and about 'what a shadow this life is, and how men cling to what is after all but a small part of the great world's life.' Then Dr. Dabbs told him (for his interest was always keen in the lot of lowly men) of an incident that had lately happened. A villager, ninety years old, was dying, and had so much pined to see his old bed-ridden wife once more, that they had carried her to where he lay. He pressed his shrunken hand upon her hand, and in a husky voice said to her 'Come soon,' and soon after passed away himself. My father murmured 'True faith,' and the tears were in his voice. Suddenly he gathered himself together and spoke one word about himself to the doctor, 'Death?' Dr. Dabbs bowed his head, and he said, 'That's well.' For the next hours the full moon flooded the room and the great landscape outside with light; and we watched in solemn stillness. His patience and quiet strength had power upon those who were nearest and dearest to him; we felt thankful for the love and the utter peace of it all; and his own lines of comfort from the *In Memoriam*

were strongly borne in upon us, . . . . and as he was passing away, I spoke over him his own prayer, 'God accept him! Christ receive him!' because I knew that he would have wished it. . . . . He looked very grand and peaceful with the deep furrows of thought almost smoothed away; and the old clergyman of Lurgashall stood by the bed with his hands raised, and said, 'Lord Tennyson, God has taken you, who made you a prince of men! Farewell!'"

On the 12th of October he was buried with simple and majestic funeral rites in Westminster Abbey. His body was laid to rest beside that of his friend and fellow-poet, Robert Browning. The Chaucer monument looks down upon their graves, and all about them are the great names of English literature, "On fames eternall bead-roll worthe to be fyled"





SELECTIONS FROM  
TENNYSON





ALFRED TENNYSON.

A PEN-PORTRAIT BY CARLYLE.

*'Alfred is one of the few British and foreign figures (a not increasing number, I think) who are and remain beautiful to me, a true human soul, or some approximation thereto, to whom your own soul can say, 'Brother!' . . . I think he must be under forty, not much under it. One of the finest looking men in the world. A great shock of rough, dusky dark hair; bright, laughing hazel eyes; massive aquiline face, most massive yet most delicate; of sallow brown complexion, almost Indian looking; clothes cynically loose, free and easy; smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musical, metallic, fit for loud laughter and piercing wail, and all that may lie between; speech and speculation free and plenteous.'*

## *THE LADY OF SHALOTT*

### PART I

On either side the river lie  
Long fields of barley and of rye,  
That clothe the wold and meet the sky;  
And thro' the field the road runs by  
    To many-tower'd Camelot;  
And up and down the people go,  
Gazing where the lilies blow  
Round an island there below,  
    The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs for ever  
By the island in the river  
    Flowing down to Camelot.  
Four grey walls, and four grey towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle embowers  
    The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,  
Slide the heavy barges trail'd  
By slow horses; and unhail'd  
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd  
    Skimming down to Camelot:  
But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
Or at the casement seen her stand?  
Or is she known in all the land,  
    The Lady of Shalott?

Only reapers, reaping early  
 In among the bearded barley,  
 Hear a song that echoes cheerly  
 From the river winding clearly,  
     Down to tower'd Camelot:  
 And by the moon the reaper weary,  
 Piling sheaves in uplands airy,  
 Listening, whispers 'Tis the fairy  
     Lady of Shalott.'

## PART II

THERE she weaves by night and day  
 A magic web with colours gay.  
 She has heard a whisper say,  
 A curse is on her if she stay  
     To look down to Camelot.  
 She knows not what the curse may be,  
 And so she weaveth steadily,  
 And little other care hath she,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear  
 That hangs before her all the year,  
 Shadows of the world appear.  
 There she sees the highway near  
     Winding down to Camelot:  
 There the river eddy whirls,  
 And there the surly village-churls,  
 And the red cloaks of market girls,  
     Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
 An abbot on an ambling pad,  
 Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
 Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,  
     Goes by to tower'd Camelot;  
 And sometimes thro' the mirror blue  
 The knights come riding two and two:  
 She hath no loyal knight and true,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights  
To weave the mirror's magic sights,  
For often thro' the silent nights  
A funeral, with plumes and lights,  
And music, went to Camelot :  
Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed ;  
'I am half sick of shadows,' said  
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,  
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,  
And flamed upon the brazen greaves  
Of bold Sir Lancelot.  
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd  
To a lady in his shield,  
That sparkled on the yellow field,  
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,  
Like to some branch of stars we see  
Hung in the golden Galaxy.  
The bridle bells rang merrily  
As he rode down to Camelot :  
And from his blazon'd baldric slung  
A mighty silver bugle hung,  
And as he rode his armour rung,  
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather  
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,  
The helmet and the helmet-feather  
Burn'd like one burning flame together,  
As he rode down to Camelot.  
As often thro' the purple night,  
Below the starry clusters bright,  
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,  
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd;  
 On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode;  
 From underneath his helmet flow'd  
 His coal-black curls as on he rode,  
     As he rode down to Camelot.  
 From the bank and from the river  
 He flash'd into the crystal mirror,  
 'Tirra lirra,' by the river  
     Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
 She made three paces thro' the room,  
 She saw the water-lily bloom,  
 She saw the helmet and the plume,  
     She look'd down to Camelot.  
 Out flew the web and floated wide;  
 The mirror cracked from side to side;  
 'The curse is come upon me,' cried  
     The Lady of Shalott.

## PART IV

In the stormy east-wind straining,  
 The pale yellow woods were waning,  
 The broad stream in his banks complaining,  
 Heavily the low sky raining  
     Over tower'd Camelot;  
 Down she came and found a boat  
 Beneath a willow left afloat,  
 And round about the prow she wrote  
     *The Lady of Shalott.*

And down the river's dim expanse—  
 Like some bold seer in a trance,  
 Seeing all his own mischance—  
 With a glassy countenance  
     Did she look to Camelot.  
 And at the closing of the day  
 She loosed the chain, and down she lay;  
 The broad stream bore her far away,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white  
That loosely flew to left and right—  
The leaves upon her falling light—  
Thro' the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot :  
And as the boat-head wound along  
The willowy hills and fields among,  
They heard her singing her last song,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,  
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot ;  
For ere she reach'd upon the tide  
The first house by the water-side,  
Singing in her song she died,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,  
By garden-wall and gallery,  
A gleaming shape she floated by,  
Dead-pale between the houses high,  
Silent into Camelot.  
Out upon the wharfs they came,  
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,  
And round the prow they read her name,  
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this ? and what is here ?  
And in the lighted palace near  
Died the sound of royal cheer ;  
And they cross'd themselves for fear,  
All the knights at Camelot :  
But Lancelot mused a little space ;  
He said, 'She has a lovely face ;  
God in his mercy lend her grace,  
The Lady of Shalott.'

*THE LOTOS-EATERS*

'COURAGE!' he said, and pointed toward the land,  
'This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon.  
In the afternoon they came unto a land,  
In which it seemed always afternoon.  
All round the coast the languid air did swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;  
And like a downward smoke, the slender stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;  
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,  
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.  
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow  
From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,  
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with showery drops,  
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown  
In the red West: thro' mountain clefts the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down  
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale  
And meadow, set with slender galingale;  
A land where all things always seem'd the same!  
And round about the keel with faces pale,  
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,  
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave  
To each, but whoso did receive of them,  
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave  
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave  
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,  
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;  
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,  
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

## *The Lotos-Eaters*

II

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,  
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;  
And sweet it was to dream of Father-land,  
Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore  
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,  
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.  
Then some one said, 'We will return no more';  
And all at once they sang, 'Our island home  
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam.'

### CHORIC SONG

#### I

There is sweet music here that softer falls  
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
Or night-dews on still waters between walls  
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass;  
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,  
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes;  
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful  
skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,  
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

#### II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,  
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,  
While all things else have rest from weariness?  
All things have rest: why should we toil alone,  
We only toil, who are the first of things,  
And make perpetual moan,  
Still from one sorrow to another thrown:  
Nor ever fold our wings,  
And cease from wanderings,  
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm;  
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,  
'There is no joy but calm!'  
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?



## III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,  
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud  
With winds upon the branch, and there  
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,  
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon  
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow  
Falls, and floats adown the air.  
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,  
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,  
Drops in a silent autumn night.  
All its allotted length of days,  
The flower ripens in its place,  
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,  
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

## IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,  
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.  
Death is the end of life; ah, why  
Should life all labour be?  
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,  
And in a little while our lips are dumb.  
Let us alone. What is it that will last?  
All things are taken from us, and become  
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.  
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have  
To war with evil? Is there any peace  
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?  
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave  
In silence; ripen, fall and cease:  
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease.

## V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,  
With half-shut eyes ever to seem  
Falling asleep in a half-dream!  
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,  
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;  
To hear each other's whisper'd speech;  
Eating the Lotos day by day,  
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,

And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;  
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly  
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;  
To muse and brood and live again in memory,  
With those old faces of our infancy  
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,  
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

## VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,  
And dear the last embraces of our wives  
And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change ;  
For surely now our household hearths are cold :  
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :  
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.  
Or else the island princes over-bold  
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings  
Before them of the ten-years' war in Troy,  
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.  
Is there confusion in the little isle ?  
Let what is broken so remain.  
The Gods are hard to reconcile :  
'Tis hard to settle order once again.  
There is confusion worse than death,  
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,  
Long labour unto aged breath,  
Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars  
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

## VII

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,  
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)  
With half-dropt eyelids still,  
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,  
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly  
His waters from the purple hill—  
To hear the dewy echoes calling  
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—  
To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling  
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine !  
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,  
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine.

## VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :  
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek :  
 All day the wind breathes low with mellow tone :  
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone  
 Round and round the spicy down the yellow Lotos-  
           dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,  
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge  
           was seething free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-foun-  
           tains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,  
 In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined  
 On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.  
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd  
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly  
           curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming  
           world :

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,  
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps  
           and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,  
           and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful  
           song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,  
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong ;  
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,  
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,  
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil ;  
 Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—  
           down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,  
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore  
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and  
           oar ;

Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

ÆNONE

THERE lies a vale in Ida, lovelier  
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills.  
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,  
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand  
The lawns and meadow-iedges midway down  
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars  
The long brook falling thro' the clov'n ravine  
In cataract after cataract to the sea.  
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus  
Stands up and takes the morning: but in front  
The gorges, opening wide apart, reveal  
Troas and Ilion's column'd citadel,  
The crown of Troas.

Hither came at noon  
Mournful Ænone, wandering forlorn  
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills.  
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her neck  
Floated her hair or seem'd to float in rest.  
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,  
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain-shade  
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper cliff.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill:  
The grasshopper is silent in the grass:  
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,  
Rests like a shadow, and the cicada sleeps.  
The purple flowers droop: the golden bee  
Is lily-cradled: I alone awake.  
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love,  
My heart is breaking, and my eyes are dim,  
And I am all aweary of my life.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Hear me O Earth, hear me O Hills, O Caves  
That house the cold crown'd snake! O mountain brooks,

I am the daughter of a River-God,  
 Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all  
 My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls  
 Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed,  
 A cloud that gather'd shape: for it may be  
 That, while I speak of it, a little while  
 My heart may wander from its deeper woe.

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 I waited underneath the dawning hills,  
 Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy-dark,  
 And dewy-dark aloft the mountain pine:  
 Beautiful Paris, evil-hearted Paris,  
 Leading a jet-black goat white-horn'd, white-hooved,  
 Came up from reedy Simois all alone.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Far-off the torrent call'd me from the cleft:  
 Far up the solitary morning smote  
 The streaks of virgin snow. With down-dropt eyes  
 I sat alone: white-breasted like a star  
 Fronting the dawn he moved; a leopard skin  
 Droop'd from his shoulder, but his sunny hair  
 Cluster'd about his temples like a God's;  
 And his cheek brighten'd as the foam-bow brightens  
 When the wind blows the foam, and all my heart  
 Went forth to embrace him coming ere he came.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 He smiled, and opening out his milk-white palm  
 Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold,  
 That smelt ambrosially, and while I look'd  
 And listen'd, the full-flowing river of speech  
 Came down upon my heart.

"My own Ænone,  
 Beautiful-brow'd Ænone, my own soul,  
 Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind engrav'n  
 'For the most fair,' would seem to award it thine,  
 As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt

The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace  
Of movement, and the charm of married brows."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
He prest the blossom of his lips to mine,  
And added "This was cast upon the board,  
When all the full-faced presence of the Gods  
Ranged in the halls of Peleus; whereupon  
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere due:  
But light-foot Iris brought it yester-eve,  
Delivering, that to me, by common voice  
Elected umpire, Herè comes to-day,  
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each  
This meed of fairest. Thou, within the cave  
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,  
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard  
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
It was the deep midnoon: one silvery cloud  
Had lost his way between the piney sides  
Of this long glen. Then to the bower they came,  
Naked they came to that smooth-swarded bower,  
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,  
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel,  
Lotos and lilies: and a wind arose,  
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,  
This way and that, in many a wild festoon  
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs  
With bunch and berry and flower thro' and thro'.

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,  
And o'er him flow'd a golden cloud, and lean'd  
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew.  
Then first I heard the voice of her, to whom  
Coming thro' Heaven, like a light that grows  
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods  
Rise up for reverence. She to Paris made  
Proffer of royal power, ample rule  
Unquestion'd, overflowing revenue

Wherewith to embellish state, "from many a vale  
And river-sunder'd champaign clothed with corn,  
Or labour'd mines undrainable of ore.  
Honour," she said, "and homage, tax and toll,  
From many an inland town and haven large,  
Mast-throng'd beneath her shadowing citadel  
In glassy bays among her tallest towers."

'O mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Still she spake on and still she spake of power,  
"Which in all action is the end of all ;  
Power fitted to the season ; wisdom-bred  
And throned of wisdom—from all neighbour crowns  
Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand  
Fail from the sceptre-staff. Such boon from me,  
From me, Heaven's Queen, Paris, to thee king-born,  
A shepherd all thy life but yet king-born,  
Should come most welcome, seeing men, in power  
Only, are likest Gods, who have attain'd  
Rest in a happy place and quiet seats  
Above the thunder, with undying bliss  
In knowledge of their own supremacy."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit  
Out at arm's-length, so much the thought of power  
Flatter'd his spirit ; but Pallas where she stood  
Somewhat apart, her clear and bared limbs  
O'erthwarted with the brazen-headed spear  
Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold,  
The while, above, her full and earnest eye  
Over her snow-cold breast and angry cheek  
Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply.

"Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,  
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.  
Yet not for power (power of herself  
Would come uncall'd for), but to live by law,  
Acting the law we live by without fear ;  
And, because right is right, to follow right  
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Again she said: "I woo thee not with gifts.  
Sequel of guerdon could not alter me  
To fairer. Judge thou me by what I am,  
So shalt thou find me fairest.

Yet, indeed.

If gazing on divinity disrobed  
Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,  
Unbiass'd by self-profit, oh! rest thee sure  
That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,  
So that my vigour, wedded to thy blood,  
Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,  
To push thee forward thro' a life of shocks,  
Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow  
Sinew'd with action, and the full-grown will,  
Circled thro' all experiences, pure law,  
Commeasure perfect freedom."

'Here she ceased,  
And Paris ponder'd, and I cried, "O Paris,  
Give it to Pallas!" but he heard me not,  
Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

'O mother Ida, many-fountain'd Ida,  
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
Idalian Aphrodite beautiful,  
Fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells,  
With rosy slender fingers backward drew  
From her warm brows and bosom her deep hair  
Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat  
And shoulder: from the violets her light foot  
Shone rosy-white, and o'er her rounded form  
Between the shadows of the vine-bunches  
Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved.

'Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes,  
The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh  
Half-whisper'd in his ear, "I promise thee  
The fairest and most loving wife in Greece."  
She spoke and laugh'd: I shut my sight for fear:  
But when I look'd, Paris had raised his arm,  
And I beheld great Here's angry eyes,



As she withdrew into the golden cloud,  
 And I was left alone within the bower ;  
 And from that time to this I am alone,  
 And I shall be alone until I die.

'Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die.  
 Fairest--why fairest wife? am I not fair?  
 My love hath told me so a thousand times.  
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday,  
 When I past by, a wild and wanton pard,  
 Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail  
 Crouch'd fawning in the weed. Most loving is she?  
 Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms  
 Were wound about thee, and my hot lips prest  
 Close, close to thine in that quick-falling dew  
 Of fruitful kisses, thick as Autumn rains  
 Flash in the pools of whirling Simois.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
 They came, they cut away my tallest pines,  
 My dark tall pines, that plumed the craggy ledge  
 High over the blue gorge, and all between  
 The snowy peak and snow-white cataract  
 Foster'd the callow eaglet--from 'neath  
 Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark morn  
 The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat  
 Low in the valley. Never, never more  
 Shall lone Cenone see the morning mist  
 Sweep thro' them; never see them overlaid  
 With narrow moon-lit slips of silver cloud,  
 Between the loud stream and the trembling stars.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
 I wish that somewhere in the ruin'd folds,  
 Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,  
 Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her,  
 The Abominable, that uninvited came  
 Into the fair Peleian banquet-hall,  
 And cast the golden fruit upon the board,  
 And bred this change; that I might speak my mind,  
 And tell her to her face how much I hate  
 Her presence, hated both of Gods and men.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,  
In this green valley, under this green hill,  
Ev'n on this hand, and sitting on this stone?  
Seal'd it with kisses? water'd it with tears?  
O happy tears, and how unlike to these!  
O happy Heaven, how canst thou see my face?  
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my weight?  
O death, death, death, thou ever-floating cloud,  
There are enough unhappy on this earth,  
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live:  
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,  
And shadow all my soul, that I may die.  
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within,  
Weigh heavy on my eyelids: let me die.

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts  
Do shape themselves within me, more and more,  
Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear  
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost hills,  
Like footsteps upon wool. I dimly see  
My far-off doubtful purpose, as a mother  
Conjectures of the features of her child  
Ere it is born: her child!—a shudder comes  
Across me: never child be born of me,  
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

'O mother, hear me yet before I die.  
Hear me, O earth. I will not die alone,  
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me  
Walking the cold and starless road of Death  
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love  
With the Greek woman. I will rise and go  
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth  
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says  
A fire dances before her, and a sound  
Rings ever in her ears of armed men.  
What this may be I know not, but I know  
That, wheresoe'er I am by night and day,  
All earth and air seem only burning fire.'

*THE EPIC*

At Francis Allen's on the Christmas-eve—  
 The game of forfeits done—the girls all kiss'd  
 Beneath the sacred bush and past away—  
 The parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall,  
 The host, and I sat round the wassail-bowl,  
 Then half-way ebb'd: and there we held a talk,  
 How all the old honour had from Christmas gone,  
 Or gone, or dwindled down to some odd games  
 In some odd nooks like this; till I, tired out  
 With cutting eights that day upon the pond,  
 Where, three times slipping from the outer edge,  
 I bump'd the ice into three several stars,  
 Fell in a doze; and half-awake I heard  
 The parson taking wide and wider sweeps,  
 Now harping on the church commissioners,  
 Now hawking at Geology and schism;  
 Until I woke, and found him settled down  
 Upon the general decay of faith  
 Right thro' the world—'at home was little left,  
 And none abroad: there was no anchor, none,  
 To hold by.' Francis, laughing, clapt his hand  
 On Everard's shoulder, with 'I hold by him.'  
 'And I,' quoth Everard, 'by the wassail-bowl.'  
 'Why yes,' I said, 'we knew your gift that way  
 At college: but another which you had—  
 I mean of verse (for so we held it then)—  
 What came of that?' 'You know,' said Frank, 'he burnt  
 His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books'—  
 And then to me demanding why? 'Oh, sir,  
 He thought that nothing new was said, or else  
 Something so said 'twas nothing—that a truth  
 Looks freshest in the fashion of the day:  
 God knows: he has a mint of reasons: ask.  
 It pleased *me* well enough.' 'Nay, nay,' said Hall,  
 'Why take the style of those heroic times?  
 For nature brings not back the Mastodon,  
 Nor we those times; and why should any man  
 Remodel models? these twelve books of mine

Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,  
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.' 'But I,'  
Said Francis, 'pick'd the eleventh from this hearth,  
And have it: keep a thing, its use will come.  
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.'  
He laugh'd, and I, though sleepy, like a horse  
That hears the corn-bin open, prick'd my ears;  
For I remember'd Everard's college fame  
When we were Freshmen: then at my request  
He brought it; and the poet little urged,  
But with some prelude of disparagement.  
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,  
Deep-chested music, and to this result.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd  
Among the mountains by the winter sea;  
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,  
Had fall'n in Lyonness about their Lord,  
King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,  
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,  
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,  
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,  
A broken chancel with a broken cross,  
That stood on a dark strait of barren land.  
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one  
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.  
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
The sequel of to-day unsolders all  
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights  
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep  
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we  
Shall never more, at any future time,  
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,  
Walking about the gardens and the halls  
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.  
I perish by this people which I made,—  
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again  
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,  
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm

That without help I cannot last till morn.  
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,  
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how  
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm  
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a king:  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known:  
But now delay not: take Excalibur,  
And fling him far into the middle mere:  
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:  
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,  
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.  
A little thing may harm a wounded man.  
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,  
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept  
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,  
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,  
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang  
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down  
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,  
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,  
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,  
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth  
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:  
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,  
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work  
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long  
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,  
This way and that dividing the swift mind,  
In act to throw: but at the last it seem'd  
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd  
There in the many-knotted waterflags,  
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.  
So strode he back slow to the wounded king.  
Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:  
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?

What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?’

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

‘I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag.’

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:

‘Thou hast betray’d thy nature and thy name,  
Not rendering true answer, as beseem’d

Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight:

For surer sign had follow’d, either hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.

Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing

I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.’

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,

Counting the dewy pebbles, fix’d in thought;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,

How curiously and strangely chased, he smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud.

‘And if indeed I cast the brand away,

Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done?

What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,

Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.

Were it well to obey then, if a king demand

An act unprofitable, against himself?

The King is sick, and knows not what he does.

What record, or what relic of my lord

Should be to aftertime, but empty breath

And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,

Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,

Some one might show it at a joust of arms,

Saying, “King Arthur’s sword, Excalibur,

Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.

Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps

Upon the hidden bases of the hills.”

So might some old man speak in the aftertime

To all the people, winning reverence.

But now much honour and much fame were lost.’

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,  
And hid Excalibur the second time,  
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:  
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:  
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:  
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,  
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king,  
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye  
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,  
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,  
In whom should meet the offices of all,  
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;  
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl  
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.  
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice.  
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:  
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,  
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,  
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged  
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,  
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand  
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,  
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,  
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,  
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock  
By night, with noises of the northern sea.  
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur:  
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him  
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.  
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:  
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.  
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:

'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems  
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,  
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,  
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,  
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.  
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;  
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,  
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,  
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him  
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:  
'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.  
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,  
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear  
My wound h'ath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,  
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,  
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes  
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere  
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,  
And would have spoken, but he found not words,  
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,  
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,  
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,  
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed  
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,  
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!  
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,  
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,  
Larger than human on the frozen hills.  
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry  
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.  
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves  
And barren chasms, and all to left and right  
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—  
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge.



Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,  
Beneath them; and descending they were ware  
That all the decks were dense with stately forms  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose  
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, 'Place me in the barge,'  
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.  
But she, that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,  
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against his brow  
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white  
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops  
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;  
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,  
'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?  
For now I see the true old times are dead,  
When every morning brought a noble chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble knight.  
Such times have been not since the light that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty world;

And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge :  
'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.  
But now farewell. I am going a long way  
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—  
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)  
To the island-valley of Avilion;  
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies  
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns  
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan  
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood  
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
Revolving many memories, till the hull  
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,  
And on the mere the wailing died away.

Here ended Hall, and our last light, that long  
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell:  
At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,  
And waked with silence, grunted 'Good!' but we

Sat rapt: it was the tone with which he read—  
Perhaps some modern touches here and there  
Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—  
Or else we loved the man, and prized his work;  
I know not: but we sitting, as I said,  
The cock crew loud; as at that time of year  
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn:  
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,  
'There now—that's nothing!' drew a little back.  
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,  
That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue:  
And so to bed; where yet in sleep I seem'd  
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,  
Point after point; till on to dawn, when dreams  
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,  
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,  
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore  
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman  
Of stateliest port; and all the people cried,  
'Arthur is come again: he cannot die.'  
Then those that stood upon the hills behind  
Repeated—'come again, and thrice as fair;'  
And, further inland, voices echoed—'come  
With all good things, and war shall be no more.'  
At this a hundred bells began to peal,  
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed  
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas morn.

*ULYSSES*

It little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
Match'd with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.  
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink  
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd  
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those  
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when

Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
 Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;  
 For always roaming with a hungry heart  
 Much have I seen and known; cities of men  
 And manners, climates, councils, governments,  
 Myself not least, but honour'd of them all;  
 And drunk delight of battle with my peers,  
 Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.  
 I am a part of all that I have met;  
 Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'  
 Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades  
 For ever and for ever when I move.  
 How dull it is to pause, to make an end,  
 To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!  
 As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life  
 Were all too little, and of one to me  
 Little remains: but every hour is saved  
 From that eternal silence, something more,  
 A bringer of new things; and vile it were  
 For some three suns to store and hoard myself,  
 And this grey spirit yearning in desire  
 To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,  
 Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,  
 To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—  
 Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil  
 This labour, by slow prudence to make mild  
 A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees  
 Subdue them to the useful and the good.  
 Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere  
 Of common duties, decent not to fail  
 In offices of tenderness, and pay  
 Meet adoration to my household gods,  
 When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port: the vessel puffs her sail:  
 There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,  
 Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought with  
 me—

That ever with a frolic welcome took  
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed  
 Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;  
 Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;

Death closes all: but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,  
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.  
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:  
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep  
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,  
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.  
Push off, and sitting well in order smite  
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds  
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths  
Of all the western stars, until I die.  
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,  
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.  
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

*YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT EASE*

You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,  
Within this region I subsist,  
Whose spirits falter in the mist,  
And languish for the purple seas?

It is the land that freemen till,  
That sober-suited Freedom chose,  
The land, where girt with friends or foes  
A man may speak the thing he will;

A land of settled government,  
A land of just and old renown,  
Where Freedom broadens slowly down  
From precedent to precedent:

Where faction seldom gathers head,  
But by degrees to fullness wrought,  
The strength of some diffusive thought  
Hath time and space to work and spread.

Should banded unions persecute  
Opinion, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil crime,  
And individual freedom mute ;

Tho' Power should make from land to land  
The name of Britain trebly great—  
'Tho' every channel of the State  
Should almost choke with golden sand—

Yet waft me from the harbour-mouth,  
Wild wind! I seek a warmer sky,  
And I will see before I die  
The palms and temples of the South.

*OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS*

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,  
The thunders breaking at her feet:  
Above her shook the starry lights:  
She heard the torrents meet.

There in her place she did rejoice,  
Self-gather'd in her prophet-mind,  
But fragments of her mighty voice  
Came rolling on the wind.

Then stept she down thro' town and field  
To mingle with the human race,  
And part by part to men reveal'd  
The fullness of her face—

Grave mother of majestic works,  
From her isle-altar gazing down,  
Who, God-like, grasps the triple forks,  
And, King-like, wears the crown:

Her open eyes desire the truth.

The wisdom of a thousand years

Is in them. May perpetual youth

Keep dry their light from tears ;

That her fair form may stand and shine,

Make bright our days and light our dreams,

Turning to scorn with lips divine

The falsehood of extremes !

*LOVE THOU THY LAND, WITH LOVE  
FAR-BROUGHT*

Love thou thy land, with love far-brought

From out the storied Past, and used

Within the Present, but transfused

Thro' future time by power of thought.

True love turn'd round on fixed poles,

Love, that endures not sordid ends,

For English natures, freemen, friends,

Thy brothers and immortal souls.

But pause not a hasty time,

Nor fill with crude imaginings

The hard, wild hearts and feeble wings,

That every sophister can lime.

Deliver not the tasks of might

To weakness, neither hide the ray

From those, not blind, who wait for day,

Tho' sitting girt with doubtful light.

Make knowledge circle with the winds ;

But let her herald, Reverence, fly

Before her to whatever sky

Bear seed of men and growth of minds.

Watch what main-currents draw the years :

Cut Prejudice against the grain :

But gentle words are always gain :

Regard the weakness of thy peers :

Nor toil for title, place, or touch  
Of pension, neither count on praise:  
It grows to guerdon afterdays:  
Nor deal in watchwords overmuch;

Not clinging to some ancient saw;  
Not master'd by some modern term;  
Not swift nor slow to change, but firm:  
And in its season bring the law;

That from Discussion's lip may fall  
With Life, that, working strongly, binds—  
Set in all lights by many minds,  
To close the interests of all.

For Nature also, cold and warm,  
And moist and dry, devising long,  
Thro' many agents making strong,  
Matures the individual form.

Meet is it changes should control  
Our being, lest we rust in ease:  
We all are changed by still degrees,  
All but the basis of the soul.

So let the change which comes be free  
To ingroove itself with that which flies,  
And work, a joint of state that plies  
Its office, moved with sympathy.

A saying, hard to shape in act;  
For all the past of Time reveals  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals,  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

Ev'n now we hear with inward strife  
A motion toiling in the gloom—  
The Spirit of the years to come  
Yearning to mix himself with Life.

A slow-develop'd strength awaits  
Completion in a painful school;  
Phantoms of other forms of rule,  
New Majesties of mighty States—



The warders of the growing hour,  
But vague in vapour, hard to mark;  
And round them sea and air are dark  
With great contrivances of Power.

Of many changes, aptly join'd,  
Is bodied forth the second whole.  
Regard gradation, lest the soul  
Of Discord race the rising wind;

A wind to puff your idol-fires,  
And heap their ashes on the head;  
To shame the boast so often made,  
That we are wiser than our sires.

Oh yet, if Nature's evil star  
Drive men in manhood, as in youth,  
To follow flying steps of Truth  
Across the brazen bridge of war—

If New and Old, disastrous feud  
Must ever shock, like armed foes,  
And this be true, till Time shall close,  
That Principles are rain'd in blood;

Not yet the wise of heart would cease  
To hold his hope thro' shame and guilt,  
But with his hand against the hilt,  
Would pace the troubled land, like Peace;

Not less, tho' dogs of Faction bay,  
Would serve his kind in deed and word,  
Certain, if knowledge bring the sword,  
That knowledge takes the sword away—

Would love the gleams of good that broke  
From either side, nor veil his eyes:  
And if some dreadful need should rise  
Would strike, and firmly, and one stroke:

To-morrow yet would reap to-day,  
As we bear blossom of the dead;  
Earn well the thrifty months, nor wed  
Raw Haste, half-sister to Delay.

*ST. AGNES' EVE*

DEEP on the convent-roof the snows  
Are sparkling to the moon :  
My breath to heaven like vapour goes :  
May my soul follow soon !  
The shadows of the convent-towers  
Slant down the snowy sward,  
Still creeping with the creeping hours  
That lead me to my Lord :  
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear  
As are the frosty skies,  
Or this first snowdrop of the year  
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,  
To yonder shining ground :  
As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
To yonder argent round ;  
So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
My spirit before Thee ;  
So in mine earthly house I am,  
To that I hope to be.  
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,  
Thro' all yon starlight keen,  
Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,  
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ;  
The flashes come and go ;  
All heaven bursts her starry floors,  
And strows her lights below,  
And deepens on and up ! the gates  
Roll back, and far within  
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,  
To make me pure of sin.  
The sabbaths of Eternity,  
One sabbath deep and wide—  
A light upon the shining sea—  
The Bridegroom with his bride

*SIR GALAHAD*

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.  
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,  
The hard brands shiver on the steel,  
The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,  
The horse and rider reel :  
They reel, they roll in clanging lists,  
And when the tide of combat stands,  
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,  
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend  
On whom their favours fall !  
For them I battle till the end,  
To save from shame and thrall :  
But all my heart is drawn above,  
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :  
I never felt the kiss of love,  
Nor maiden's hand in mine.  
More bounteous aspects on me beam,  
Me mightier transports move and thrill ;  
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer  
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,  
A light before me swims,  
Between dark stems the forest glows,  
I hear a noise of hymns :  
Then by some secret shrine I ride ;  
I hear a voice, but none are there ;  
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,  
The tapers burning fair.  
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,  
The silver vessels sparkle clean,  
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,  
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres  
I find a magic bark ;  
I leap on board : no helmsman steers :  
I float till all is dark.  
A gentle sound, an awful light !  
Three angels bear the holy Grail :  
With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail.  
Ah, blessed vision ! blood of God !  
My spirit beats her mortal bars,  
As down dark tides the glory slides,  
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne  
Thro' dreaming towns I go,  
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,  
The streets are dumb with snow.  
The tempest crackles on the leads,  
And, ringing, spins from brand and mail ;  
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,  
And gilds the driving hail.  
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;  
No branchy thicket shelter yields ;  
But blessed forms in whistling storms  
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given  
Such hope, I know not fear ;  
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven  
That often meet me here.  
I muse on joy that will not cease,  
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,  
Pure lilies of eternal peace,  
Whose odours haunt my dreams ;  
And, stricken by an angel's hand,  
This mortal armour that I wear,  
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,  
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,  
And thro' the mountain-walls  
A rolling organ-harmony  
Swells up, and shakes and falls.

Then move the trees, the copses nod,  
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:  
'O just and faithful knight of God!  
Ride on! the prize is near.'  
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;  
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,  
All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,  
Until I find the holy Grail.

*BREAK, BREAK, BREAK*

BREAK, break, break,  
On thy cold grey stones, O Sea!  
And I would that my tongue could utter  
The thoughts that arise in me.

O well for the fisherman's boy,  
That he shouts with his sister at play!  
O well for the sailor lad,  
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on  
To their haven under the hill;  
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,  
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!  
But the tender grace of a day that is dead  
Will never come back to me.

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF  
WELLINGTON

I

Bury the Great Duke  
With an empire's lamentation,  
Let us bury the Great Duke  
To the noise of the mourning of a mighty nation,  
Mourning when their leaders fall,  
Warriors carry the warrior's pall,  
And sorrow darkens hamlet and hall.

II

Where shall we lay the man whom we deplore?  
Here, in streaming London's central roar.  
Let the sound of those he wrought for,  
And the feet of those he fought for,  
Echo round his bones for evermore.

III

Lead out the pageant: sad and slow,  
As fits an universal woe,  
Let the long long procession go,  
And let the sorrowing crowd about it grow,  
And let the mournful martial music blow;  
The last great Englishman is low.

IV

Mourn, for to us he seems the last,  
Remembering all his greatness in the Past.  
No more in soldier fashion will he greet  
With lifted hand the gazer in the street.  
O friends, our chief state-oracle is mute:  
Mourn for the man of long-enduring blood,  
The statesman-warrior, moderate, resolute,  
Whole in himself, a common good.  
Mourn for the man of amplest influence,  
Yet clearest of ambitious crime,  
Our greatest yet with least pretence,

Great in council and great in war,  
Foremost captain of his time,  
Rich in saving common-sense,  
And, as the greatest only are,  
In his simplicity sublime.  
O good grey head which all men knew,  
O voice from which their omens all men drew,  
O iron nerve to true occasion true,  
O fall'n at length that tower of strength  
Which stood four-square to all the winds that blew!  
Such was he whom we deplore.  
The long self-sacrifice of life is o'er.  
The great World-victor's victor will be seen no more.

## V

All is over and done:  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
England, for thy son.  
Let the bell be toll'd.  
Render thanks to the Giver,  
And render him to the mould.  
Under the cross of gold  
That shines over city and river,  
There he shall rest for ever  
Among the wise and the bold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a reverent people behold  
The towering car, the sable steeds:  
Bright let it be with his blazon'd deeds,  
Dark in its funeral fold.  
Let the bell be toll'd:  
And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd;  
And the sound of the sorrowing anthem roll'd  
Thro' the dome of the golden cross;  
And the volleying cannon thunder his loss;  
He knew their voices of old.  
For many a time in many a clime  
His captain's-ear has heard them boom  
Bellowing victory, bellowing doom;  
When he with those deep voices wrought,  
Guarding realms and kings from shame;  
With those deep voices our dead captain taught

The tyrant, and asserts his claim  
In that dread sound to the great name,  
Which he has worn so pure of blame,  
In praise and in dispraise the same,  
A man of well attemper'd frame.  
O civic muse, to such a name,  
To such a name for ages long,  
To such a name,  
Preserve a broad approach of fame,  
And ever-ringing avenues of song.

VI

Who is he that cometh, like an honour'd guest,  
With banner and with music, with soldier and with  
priest,  
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest?  
Mighty seaman, this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea.  
Thine island loves thee well, thou famous man,  
The greatest sailor since our world began.  
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
To thee the greatest soldier comes;  
For this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea;  
His foes were thine; he kept us free;  
O give him welcome, this is he,  
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
And worthy to be laid by thee;  
For this is England's greatest son,  
He that gain'd a hundred fights,  
Nor ever lost an English gun;  
This is he that far away  
Against the myriads of Assaye  
Clash'd with his fiery few and won;  
And underneath another sun,  
Warring on a later day,  
Round affrighted Lisbon drew  
The treble works, the vast designs  
Of his labour'd rampart-lines,  
Where he greatly stood at bay,  
Whence he issued forth anew,  
And ever great and greater grew,



Beating from the wasted vines  
Back to France her banded swarms,  
Back to France with countless blows,  
Till o'er the hills her eagles flew  
Past the Pyrenean pines,  
Follow'd up in valley and glen  
With blare of bugle, clamour of men,  
Roll of cannon and clash of arms,  
And England pouring on her foes.  
Such a war had such a close.  
Again their ravening eagle rose  
In anger, wheel'd on Europe-shadowing wings,  
And barking for the thrones of kings;  
Till one that sought but Duty's iron crown  
On that loud sabbath shook the spoiler down;  
A day of onsets of despair!  
Dash'd on every rocky square  
Their surging charges foam'd themselves away;  
Last, the Prussian trumpet blew;  
Thro' the long-tormented air  
Heaven flash'd a sudden jubilant ray,  
And down we swept and charged and overthrew.  
So great a soldier taught us there,  
What long-enduring hearts could do  
In that world's-earthquake, Waterloo!  
Mighty seaman, tender and true,  
And pure as he from taint of craven guile,  
O saviour of the silver-coasted isle,  
O shaker of the Baltic and the Nile,  
If aught of things that here befall  
Touch a spirit among things divine,  
If love of country move thee there at all,  
Be glad, because his bones are laid by thine!  
And thro' the centuries let a people's voice  
In full acclaim,  
A people's voice,  
The proof and echo of all human fame,  
A people's voice, when they rejoice  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
Attest their great commander's claim  
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,  
Eternal honour to his name.

VII

A people's voice ! we are a people yet.  
Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forget,  
Confused by brainless mobs and lawless Powers ;  
Thank Him who isled us here, and roughly set  
His Saxon in blown seas and storming showers,  
We have a voice, with which to pay the debt  
Of boundless love and reverence and regret  
To those great men who fought, and kept it ours.  
And keep it ours, O God, from brute control ;  
O Statesmen, guard us, guard the eye, the soul  
Of Europe, keep our noble England whole,  
And save the one true seed of freedom sown  
Betwixt a people and their ancient throne,  
That sober freedom out of which there springs  
Our loyal passion for our temperate kings ;  
For, saving that, ye help to save mankind  
Till public wrong be crumbled into dust,  
And drill the raw world for the march of mind,  
Till crowds at length be sane and crowns be just.  
But wink no more in slothful overtrust.  
Remember him who led your hosts ;  
He bade you guard the sacred coasts.  
Your cannons moulder on the seaward wall ;  
His voice is silent in your council-hall  
For ever ; and whatever tempests lour  
For ever silent ; even if they broke  
In thunder, silent ; yet remember all  
He spoke among you, and the Man who spoke ;  
Who never sold the truth to serve the hour,  
Nor palter'd with Eternal God for power ;  
Who let the turbid streams of rumour flow  
Thro' either babbling world of high and low ;  
Whose life was work, whose language rife  
With rugged maxims hewn from life ;  
Who never spoke against a foe ;  
Whose eighty winters freeze with one rebuke  
All great self-seekers trampling on the right :  
Truth-teller was our England's Alfred named ;  
Truth-lover was our English Duke ;  
Whatever record leap to light  
He never shall be shamed.

## VIII

Lo, the leader in these glorious wars  
Now to glorious burial slowly borne,  
Follow'd by the brave of other lands,  
He, on whom from both her open hands  
Lavish Honour shower'd all her stars,  
And affluent Fortune emptied all her horn.  
Yea, let all good things await  
Him who cares not to be great,  
But as he saves or serves the state.  
Not once or twice in our rough island-story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory :  
He that walks it, only thirsting  
For the right, and learns to deaden  
Love of self, before his journey closes,  
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting  
Into glossy purples, which outredden  
All voluptuous garden-roses.  
Not once or twice in our fair island-story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory :  
He, that ever following her commands,  
On with toil of heart and knees and hands,  
Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won  
His path upward, and prevail'd,  
Shall find the toppling crags of Duty scaled  
Are close upon the shining table-lands  
To which our God Himself is moon and sun.  
Such was he: his work is done.  
But while the races of mankind endure,  
Let his great example stand  
Colossal, seen of every land,  
And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure ;  
Till in all lands and thro' all human story  
The path of duty be the way to glory :  
And let the land whose hearths he saved from shame  
For many and many an age proclaim  
At civic revel and pomp and game,  
And when the long-illuminated cities flame,  
Their ever-loyal iron leader's fame,  
With honour, honour, honour, honour to him,  
Eternal honour to his name.

IX

Peace, his triumph will be sung  
By some yet unmoulded tongue  
Far on in summers that we shall not see :  
Peace, it is a day of pain  
For one about whose patriarchal knee  
Late the little children clung :  
O peace, it is a day of pain  
For one, upon whose hand and heart and brain  
Once the weight and fate of Europe hung.  
Ours the pain, be his the gain !  
More than is of man's degree  
Must be with us, watching here  
At this, our great solemnity.  
Whom we see not we revere.  
We revere, and we refrain  
From talk of battles loud and vain,  
And brawling memories all too free  
For such a wise humility  
As befits a solemn fane :  
We revere, and while we hear  
The tides of Music's golden sea  
Setting toward eternity,  
Uplifted high in heart and hope are we,  
Until we doubt not that for one so true  
There must be other nobler work to do  
Than when he fought at Waterloo,  
And Victor he must ever be.  
For tho' the Giant Ages heave the hill  
And break the shore, and evermore  
Make and break, and work their will ;  
Tho' world on world in myriad myriads roll  
Round us, each with different powers,  
And other forms of life than ours,  
What know we greater than the soul ?  
On God and Godlike men we build our trust.  
Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears :  
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears :  
The black earth yawns : the mortal disappears ;  
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust ;  
He is gone who seem'd so great.—

Gone; but nothing can bereave him  
Of the force he made his own  
Being here, and we believe him  
Something far advanced in State,  
And that he wears a truer crown  
Than any wreath that man can weave him.  
But speak no more of his renown,  
Lay your earthly fancies down,  
And in the vast cathedral leave him.  
God accept him, Christ receive him.

1852.

### *THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE*

#### I

HALF a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward,  
All in the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  
'Forward, the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns!' he said:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

#### II

'Forward, the Light Brigade!'  
Was there a man dismay'd?  
Not tho' the soldier knew  
Some one had blunder'd:  
Theirs not to make reply,  
Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do and die:  
Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

#### III

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them  
Volley'd and thunder'd;

Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well,  
Into the jaws of Death,  
Into the mouth of Hell  
Rode the six hundred.

IV

Flash'd all their sabres bare,  
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,  
Sabring the gunners there,  
Charging an army, while  
All the world wonder'd :  
Plunged in the battery-smoke  
Right thro' the line they broke ;  
Cossack and Russian  
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke  
Shatter'd and sunder'd.  
Then they rode back, but not,  
Not the six hundred.

V

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon behind them  
Volley'd and thunder'd ;  
Storm'd at with shot and shell,  
While horse and hero fell,  
They that had fought so well  
Came thro' the jaws of Death  
Back from the mouth of Hell,  
All that was left of them,  
Left of six hundred.

VI

When can their glory fade ?  
O the wild charge they made !  
All the world wonder'd.  
Honour the charge they made !  
Honour the Light Brigade,  
Noble six hundred !

*THE BROOK*

## AN IDYL

'HERE, by this brook, we parted; I to the East  
And he for Italy—too late—too late:  
One whom the strong sons of the world despise;  
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,  
And mellow metres more than cent for cent;  
Nor could he understand how money breeds,  
Thought it a dead thing; yet himself could make  
The thing that is not as the thing that is.  
O had he lived! In our schoolbooks we say,  
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,  
They flourish'd then or then; but life in him  
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd  
On such a time as goes before the leaf,  
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,  
And nothing perfect: yet the brook he loved,  
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,  
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air,  
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,  
Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,  
To me that loved him; for "O brook," he says,  
"O babbling brook," says Edmund in his rhyme,  
"Whence come you?" and the brook, why not? replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.

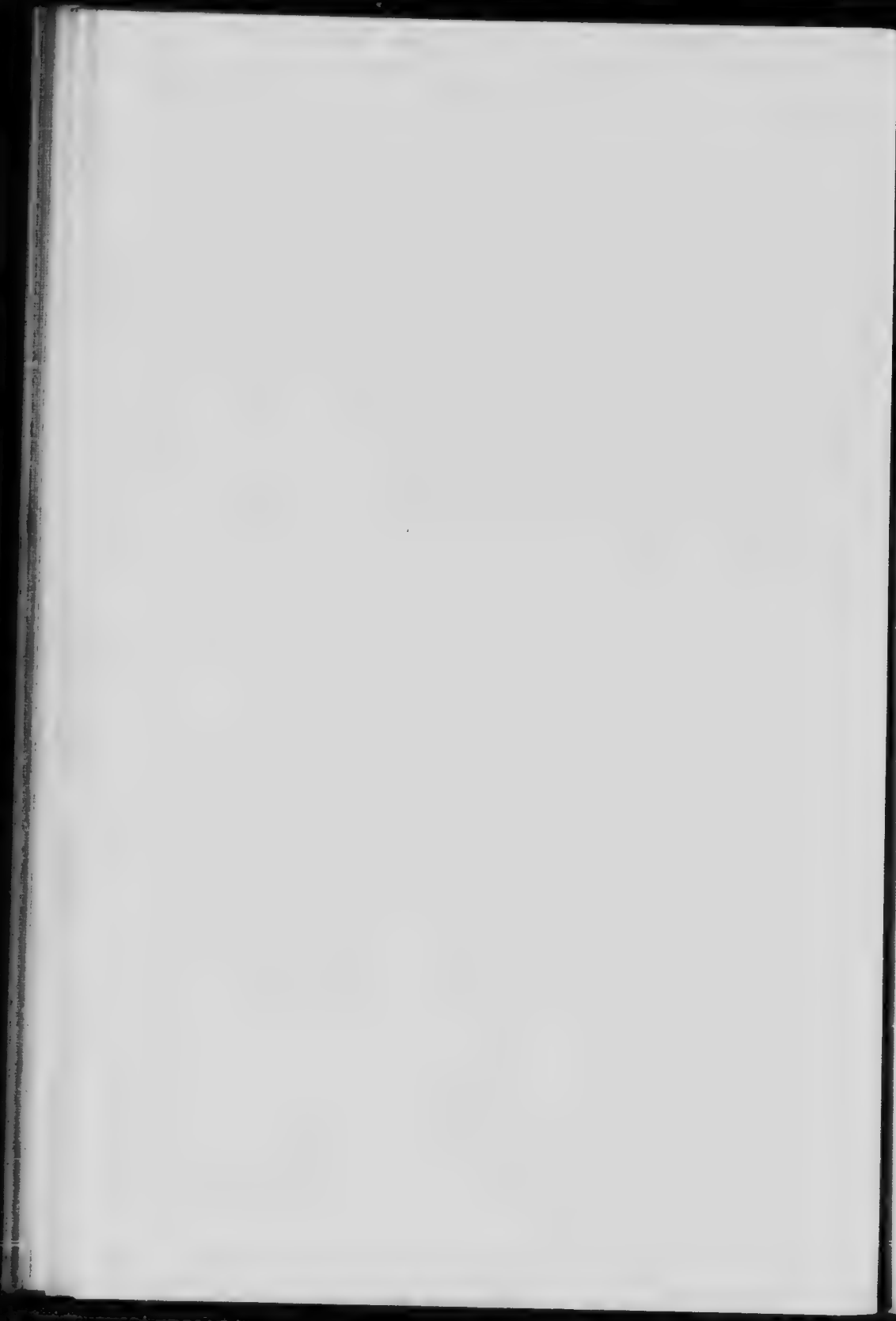
By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorps, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip's farm I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.



*I come from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.*





'Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,  
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,  
It has more ivy; there the river; and there  
Stands Philip's farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret  
By many a field and fallow,  
And many a fairy foreland set  
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

'But Philip chatter'd more than brook or bird;  
Old Philip; all about the fields you caught  
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry  
High-elbow'd grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me, as I travel  
With many a silvery waterbreak  
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

'O darling Katie Willows, his one child!  
A maiden of our century, yet most meek;  
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse;  
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand;

Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair  
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell  
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

‘Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,  
Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,  
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.  
For here I came, twenty years back—the week  
Before I parted with poor Edmund; crost  
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,  
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam  
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,  
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,  
And push’d at Philip’s garden-gate. The gate,  
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,  
Stuck; and he clamour’d from a casement, “Run”  
To Katie somewhere in the walks below.  
“Run, Katie!” Katie never ran: she moved  
To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,  
A little flutter’d, with her eyelids down,  
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

‘What was it? less of sentiment than sense  
Had Katie; not illiterate; neither one  
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,  
And nursed by mealy-mouth’d philanthropies,  
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

‘She told me. She and James had quarrell’d. Why?  
What cause of quarrel? None, she said, no cause;  
James had no cause: but when I prest the cause,  
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies  
Which anger’d her. Who anger’d James? I said.  
But Katie snatch’d her eyes at once from mine,  
And sketching with her slender pointed foot  
Some figure like a wizard’s pentagram  
On garden gravel, let my query pass  
Unclaim’d, in flushing silence, till I ask’d  
If James were coming. “Coming every day.”  
She answer’d, “ever longing to explain.  
But evermore her father came across  
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short;

And James departed vext with him and her."  
How could I help her? "Would I—was it wrong?"  
(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace  
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)  
"O would I take her father for one hour,  
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me!"  
And even while she spoke, I saw where James  
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,  
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

'O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake!  
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out  
To show the farm: full willingly he rose:  
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes  
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.  
He praised his land, his horses, his machines;  
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs;  
He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-hens;  
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs  
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts:  
Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took  
Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each,  
And naming those, his friends, for whom they were:  
Then crost the common into Darnley chase  
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern  
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.  
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,  
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said:  
"That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire."  
And there he told a long long-winded tale  
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,  
And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd,  
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm  
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,  
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,  
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;  
He gave them line: and five days after that  
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,  
Who then and there had offer'd something more,  
But he stood firm; and so the matter hung;  
He knew the man; the colt would fetch its price:  
He gave them line: and how by chance at last

(It might be May or April, he forgot,  
The last of April or the first of May)  
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,  
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,  
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,  
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

'Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,  
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,  
And ran thro' all the coltish chronicle,  
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho.  
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,  
Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,  
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,  
And with me Philip, talking still; and so  
We turn'd our foreheads from the falling sun,  
And following our own shadows thrice as long  
As when they follow'd us from Philip's door.  
Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content  
Re-risen in Katie's eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,  
I slide by hazel covers;  
I move the sweet forget-me-nots  
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance.  
Among my skimming swallows;  
I make the netted sunbeam dance  
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars  
In brambly wildernesses;  
I linger by my shingly bars;  
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go; and these are gone.  
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps.  
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire.

But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome  
Of Brunelleschi; sleeps in peace: and he,  
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words  
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb:  
I scraped the lichen from it: Katie walks  
By the long wash of Australasian seas  
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,  
And breathes in converse seasons. All are gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile  
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind  
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook  
A tansured head in middle age forlorn.  
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath  
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge  
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings;  
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,  
Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared  
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair  
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell  
Divides threefold to show the fruit within:  
Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from the farm?'  
'Yes,' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little, pardon me;  
What do they call you?' 'Katie.' 'That were strange.  
What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!' 'That is my name.'  
'Indeed!' and here he look'd so self-perplext.  
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he  
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,  
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.  
Then looking at her: 'Too happy, fresh and fair,  
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,  
To be the ghost of one who bore your name  
About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie, 'we came back.  
We bought the farm we tenanted before.  
Am I so like her? so they said on board.  
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,  
My mother, as it seems you did, the days  
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.  
My brother James is in the harvest-field:  
But she—you will be welcome—O. come in!'

*TEARS, IDLE TEARS*

TEARS, idle tears, I know not what they mean,  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the underworld,  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remember'd kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feign'd  
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

*AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT*

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out, my wife and I,  
O we fell out I know not why,  
And kiss'd again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child  
We lost in other years,  
There above the little grave,  
O there above the little grave,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

*SWEET' AND LOW*

SWEET and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me:  
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest.  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon:  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

*THE SPLENDOUR FALLS ON CASTLE WALLS*

THE splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:  
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.



O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river:  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

### *THY VOICE IS HEARD THRO' ROLLING DRUMS*

Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,  
That beat to battle where he stands;  
Thy face across his fancy comes,  
And gives the battle to his hands:  
A moment, while the trumpets blow,  
He sees his brood about thy knee;  
The next, like fire he meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

### *HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD*

HOME they brought her warrior dead:  
She nor swoon'd, nor utter'd cry:  
All her maidens, watching, said,  
'She must weep or she will die.'

Then they praised him, soft and low,  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend and noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stept,  
Took the face-cloth from the face;  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee—  
Like summer tempest came her tears—  
'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

**ASK ME NO MORE**

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;  
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,  
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape;  
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee?  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give?  
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:  
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!  
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;  
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are seal'd:  
I strove against the stream and all in vain:  
Let the great river take me to the main:  
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield;  
Ask me no more.

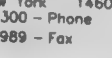
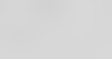
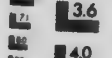
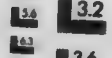
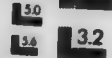
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## GENERAL CRITICISMS



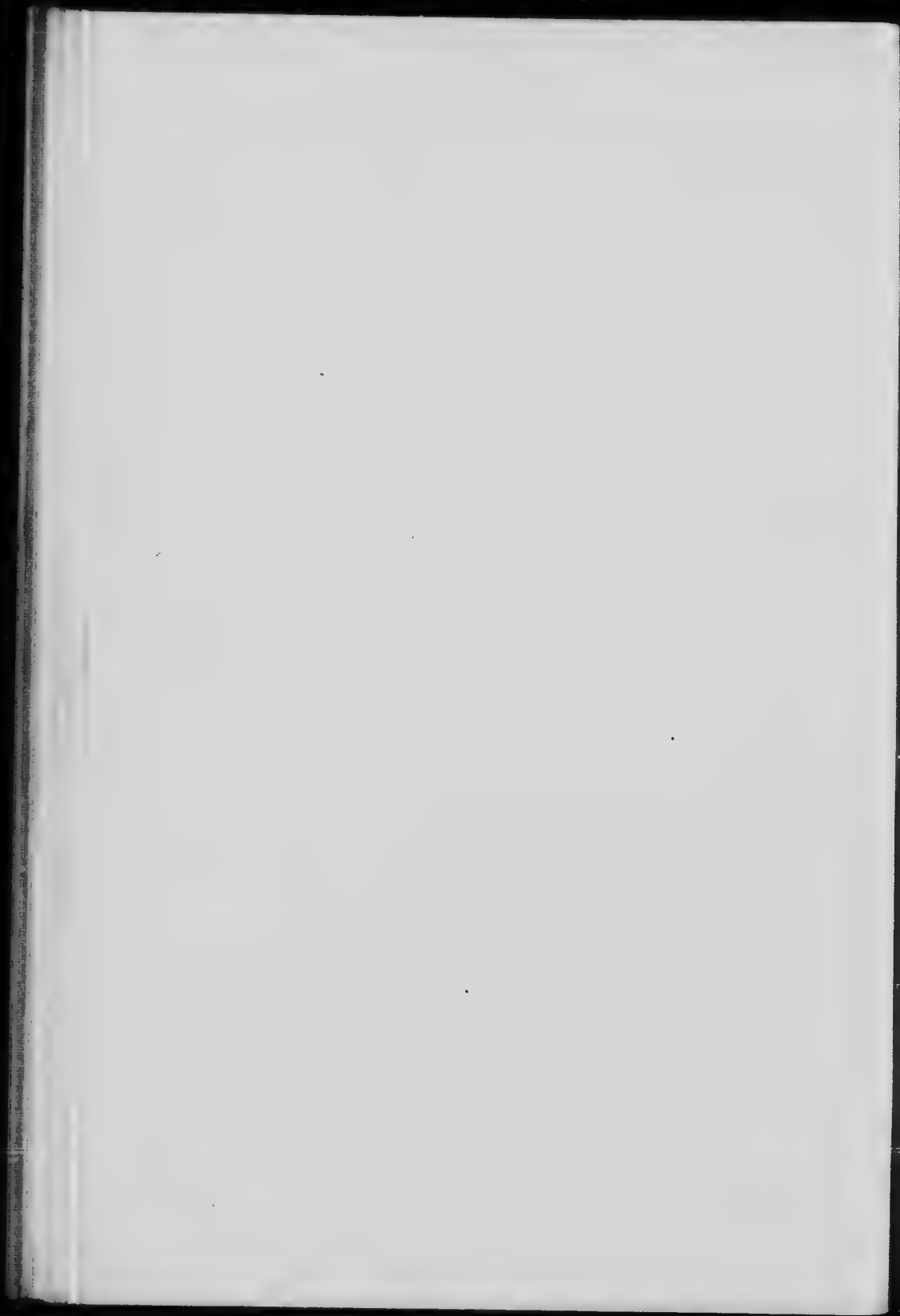
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## GENERAL CRITICISMS

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### TENNYSON IN THE SCHOOLS.

WHEN Tennyson was yet alive, a beginning was made in the school study of his poems. This was not altogether to his liking, for he said, "They use *me* as a lesson-book at schools, and they will call me 'that horrible Tennyson!'"

So great a change has taken place of late years in the study of poetry, that modern scholars may perhaps wonder why Tennyson should have looked with anxiety on the use of his poems as a lesson-book. But they will cease to wonder when they learn that in "the good old times" there were bad old ways in some things, especially in some branches of school work; the study of Milton, for example, was then chiefly concerned with the analysis of his vast sentences and the parsing of his difficult constructions; and the study of Horace was made horrible by the scanning of the verse and the quotation of Latin rules for syntax, and gender, prosody and quantity. Happily, the study of poetry in our day is directed to the excellence and charm of poetry, *as poetry*, and not to its usefulness in furnishing material for metrical and grammatical grind.

If it should be said that the average boy has no taste for the finer qualities of poetry, it may be replied that he has as much taste for such things as the average man, and



that the surest way to take away all relish from poetry is to season it with the bitter herbs of ancient syntax and prosody, not to mention the frequent use of modern birch-bark.

It may be true that young people have no liking for poetry that is subjective, meditative, and melancholy—for poetry that is “sickled o’er with the pale caste of thought.” Few healthy-minded people, old or young, can take large doses of such poetry; and it is no sign of depravity when boys and girls turn away from Young’s *Night Thoughts* and Pollock’s *Course of Time* and whole books of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. These works have doubtless many excellent passages, but even mature readers seldom turn to them a second time, except for critical purposes.

But there is poetry of another kind—poetry that fills the mind with the images of all things beautiful and grand in nature and in character, that stirs the heart by the utterance of noble sentiments and generous affections, and by the presentation of romantic situations and the story of heroic deeds. Poetry of this kind will look in vain for minds more open and hearts more sensible than the minds and hearts yet tender with the dew of youth. Even if it be thought a matter of prime importance to instruct the pupil in the devices of poetic art, it is much better to begin by awakening an interest in the poet’s thought and feeling, for then the pupil will be ready to study and admire the art by which the mind of the poet is revealed.

This selection of the poems of Tennyson is admirably suited to give both the instruction and the inspiration that belong to poetry. Take as an example the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*. The sentiments and

emotions to which this poem gives expression awaken a response in every human heart. The admiration for a great hero, the sense of military glory, the patriotic ardour, the love of liberty, the gratitude to a deliverer, the veneration for a character strong and incorruptible, the solemnity of death, the sympathy with a nation's sorrow, the sacredness of a great temple and the last resting-place of great men, - these things appeal to all true hearts, but especially to young hearts, and awaken feelings that words can only half express. Then, when we have found that the poet by his art succeeds more than other men in expressing what all men feel, we come with interest to the study of the methods by which he works. The student then learns, from examples, with interest, the difference between odes and other poems, and is pleased to recognize in the elastic and variable verse of the ode and in its freedom from a common stanza structure, the very form that suits the exalted feelings and the varying moods and passions of the soul. Again, the particular qualities of Tennyson's poetic work become interesting when it is seen how his verse is not written for silent reading, but for speaking. To a certain extent this is true of all poetry, but it is emphatically true of Tennyson's work. There is a phonetic charm—a music in the words themselves and in the manifold accords between the sense and the sound. Instrumental music is not always a help to the better expression of the poet's thought and feeling. It is said that Tennyson did not like to hear his songs sung, and the reason of this is to be found in the fact that they were really set to another kind of music—the music of the speaking voice. This was so well known by his intimate friends that they were in the

habit of asking him to read his poems to them, so that they might catch all the hidden meanings and subtle harmonies intended by the author.

To illustrate again from the Ode on the death of the great Duke : after the first two introductory sections, the description of the funeral begins in Section III., and the verse becomes sad and slow as the thing described. In IV. we are borne along with the multitude and enter into their thoughts and feelings. In V. another change in the verse suggests the tolling of the bells and the booming of cannon as we approach St. Paul's. In the opening lines of VI. the verse changes again, for it is the spirit of Nelson calling from his tomb, and asking

“ Who is he that cometh, like an honoured guest,  
With banner and with music, with soldier and with priest.  
With a nation weeping, and breaking on my rest ? ”

In answer to this challenge, the story of the Duke is told and his claim set forth to a resting-place with the mighty dead. In VII. and VIII. the history and character of the mourning nation and of their great leader are brought before our minds. In IX. we approach and enter the cathedral. Now all thoughts of earthly glory and of battles loud and vain give place to the solemnity and humility that become the House of the Lord. We realize that there is nothing great or strong—nothing in which we can trust but “ God and God-like men.” Now arise the awesome strains of the well-known funeral march, the Dead March in Saul, and the verse changes again and follows the music note by note :

“ Hush, the Dead March wails in the people's ears :  
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears :  
The black earth yawns : the mortal disappears.”

Finally, subdued and purified but not weakened by this sorrow, we commend our departed leader to the Captain of our Salvation, and we return to the duties of common life.

“Speak no more of his renown,  
Lay your earthly fancies down,  
And in the vast cathedral leave him.  
God accept him, Christ receive him.”

These harmonies between the verse and the things described are to be found in all the poems of Tennyson, and to some readers they constitute one of the greatest charms of his poetry. To others they may seem at times too minute and sought out, and possibly a distraction from the true subject of the poetry. It will be found, however, that with the poems of Tennyson, as with the finest coins, there is not only exquisite workmanship but there is also sterling weight and worth. From this point of view we see one of the chief differences between Tennyson and his great contemporary, Browning. The latter gives us the precious metal in great nuggets and bars, but Tennyson gives it in coins and medals.

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The following suggestion as to method of study may not be without interest to some school teachers and pupils, as well as to other readers.

In the short periods given to the school study of literature, the student should not be wearied by the exaction of too much, and he should not be confused by the presentation of too many things. It would be well, therefore, not to attempt an exhaustive study of each poem at the first reading, but rather to give it several readings, each of which should keep mainly to some one point of view. For example, a first reading might well be given to the discovery of the poet's meaning, his whole meaning, and nothing but his meaning. Another reading should look chiefly to the poet's feeling. And here the end is not secured when the student can tell us

truly what the feeling is, but only when he enters to some extent into the feeling and shares the poet's noble passion. Other readings should be given, particularly to the study of the poet's art. His language, its music and expressiveness; his figures, his illustrations and allusions to history and nature and literature; his choice and change of measures--each of these special studies would give freshness of interest to the main subject, and make it at once less wearisome and more systematic and thorough.

### QUALITIES OF TENNYSON'S POETRY.

THERE are two things that go to the making of a poet: first, the "vision and the faculty divine," and, secondly, the "accomplishment of verse." But these elements are variously mixed in different poets; and even in the same poet, it is sometimes the one element and sometimes the other that dominates. At his best moments, Wordsworth had both the vision and the accomplishment in a supreme degree. Too often, however, the vision failed, yet the verses ran on with fatal facility. In Shelley, the vision often glowed with such intensity that the very imperfections of his language became beautiful as the dark clouds and sullen rocks in the glory of the sunset. Our two great poets of the nineteenth century present a striking contrast from this point of view. Browning excels his brother poet, and some say he excels all other poets, in his insight into human nature and in his power of throwing the light of Heaven on the hidden virtues, and the glare of Hell upon the secret sins of the heart of man. He is pre-eminently the *Seer*, but he is rarely musical and he is often obscure. Tennyson, on the other hand, is always the *Singer* and generally the Master-singer of his age. This does not mean that he

is simply one who pleases by a "certain random tunefulness," as Carlyle called some kinds of poetic art. For in the diverse tones of Tennyson's clear harp we hear not only "The moan of doves in immemorial elms," but also "the league-long roller thundering on the reef"; not only the "'Tirra lirra' by the river," but also "the crash . . . of battle-axes on shattered helms, and shrieks . . . after the Christ."

*a) Harmonies of Sound and Sense.*

One of the first things to be noted in the poetry of Tennyson is his art in fitting aptest words to things. On every page we may discover harmonies of sound and sense. In "The Lady of Shalott," when the gay knight rode by in the blue unclouded weather, "The bridle bells rang merrily," and they seem to tinkle in the lines. We hear the chimes peal out in the Christmas bells, with their four changes :

"Peace and good-will, good-will and peace,  
Peace and good-will, to all mankind."

But the music changes once again, and we are startled by the clash and clang of the glad bells that ring the Old Year out and the New Year in :

"Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night,  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die."

In the shallow brook, where the netted sunbeams play, the lines themselves seem to chatter with the sparkling waters:

"I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on for ever."

When, in "The Lotus Eaters," the poet describes that other stream seen from afar, its waters breaking into spray as it drops over the cliff, and then coming together again for another plunge, the line moves with the thing described:

"And like a downward smoke, the slender stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem."

Again, when we are listening by the shore of the wintry mere, the dreary sound of its waters is heard in the words of the bold Sir Bedivere:

"I heard the ripple washin' ; in the reeds,  
And the wild w 'er lapping on the crag."

#### (b) Avoidance of Harsh Sounds.

Akin to this quality of Tennyson's work is his avoidance of all abrupt, harsh, sibilant sounds (except when used for some special purpose), and his preference for liquids and the full, open vowels. The *a*'s and *o*'s, the *r*'s, and *l*'s and *m*'s abound, but the verses do not hiss, or grate, or spatter. In the first three lines of the following quotation from "The Passing of Arthur," we have his use of the harsh sounds, and in the last two lines his chosen use of vowels and liquids:

"The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he bas'd  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—  
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon."

#### (c) Changes of Metre.

Tennyson changes the music of his verse again by the introduction of metrical variations. The usual order of the iambic verse, for instance, is broken by the insertion

chees, spondee, or dactyls, etc. Thus we are made  
use with the mind's eye the motion of the sword when  
flung into the mere :

" The great brand  
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,  
And, flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,  
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn."

The rushing of the waters is given in the following line  
from "The Princess" :

" Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn."

It is quite possible to make too much of these harmonies  
of words and things. When the poet's skill in the use of  
such devices obtrudes itself on our attention, we are to  
some extent diverted from the idea or subject of the poem,  
which should always be the main thing. If we would  
take in the full beauty of a painting, we must not stop to  
admire the skill of the painter in mixing the colours and  
using the brush. And if we would see the landscape, we  
must look through clear and not coloured glass.

(d) **Choice Language.**

But Tennyson's language is not only musical and  
harmonious : it is also choice. He carefully shuns the  
trite and commonplace, both in vocabulary and in imagery.  
His choice of uncommon words and figures is usually  
very happy, and the new word throws a pleasing air of  
novelty over a familiar thing. There are times, however,  
when we may fail to recognize an old friend because of the  
new dress. For example, in the line quoted above,

" Shot like a streamer of the northern morn."

some readers do not recognize at the first glance the  
Aurora Borealis, our familiar Northern Light.



## (e) Use of Compound Words.

Tennyson makes frequent use of compound words, and is particularly partial to such of them as have an alliterative ring. In the first part of the "Enone," for instance, we find *meadow-ledges*, *mountain shade*, *many-fountained*, *lily-cradled*, *dewy-dark*, *full-flowering*, *beautiful-brow'd*, *full-faced*, *smooth-swarded*, etc. This use of compound epithets is one of the Homeric echoes in the speech of Tennyson.

Passing now from the language and forms to the subjects of Tennyson's poems, we find several things worthy of note.

## (f) Fidelity of Descriptions of Nature.

No poet has ever excelled Tennyson in the minuteness and fidelity with which he depicts natural phenomena. He was said to be one of the two or three famous Englishmen of his day most noted for short-sightedness, and yet his descriptions of nature are marvels of truthfulness and delicacy. Things that we do not see at all, or that we see vaguely, are made distinct and beautiful when reflected from the mirror held up to nature by the poet. If it is a morning of wind and rain, we watch the changing colours made by the "blasts that blow the poplar white, And lash with storm the streaming pane"; and we see how the quick-falling raindrops make "the rose pull sidewise and the daisy close her crimson fringes to the shower." But when the poet's mirror is held up to the bright morning of the early year, it shows the sweet and glowing colours as in nature.

"Bring orchis, bring the fox-glove spire,  
The little speedwell's darling blue,  
Deep tulips dashed with fiery dew,  
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire."

Tennyson's descriptions are taken from nature, or they are at least suggested and shaped by nature. Some of our poets — and great poets, too, in other respects — have gone to books or pictures for their descriptions, or they have drawn too largely on the fancy, and as a consequence they put together things that do not go together in nature. The painter who painted a sailing ship bounding over the waves before a fair wind, but with flags streaming backward instead of forward with the wind, did not make a greater blunder than do poets who describe but do not study nature. Tennyson's descriptions do not err after this manner. It has been noted that his English word-pictures are given with the minuteness and detail that come of close and constant observation. The atmosphere is that of the poet's island home. It is filled with the meadowy breath of England — the saltiness of the sea. On the other hand, the foreign pictures are given in broad and general outline, or with such local colouring and detail as might be gathered from the descriptions of travellers.

(7) **Modernness of Thought and Spirit.**

Another noteworthy quality of Tennyson's poetry is its modernness of thought and spirit. This is seen not only in the numerous references to modern science, philosophy, politics, and economics, but it is found in the spirit that permeates the poems which deal professedly with romantic and classic subjects. The *King Arthur* of the *Idylls* has all the "self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control" of the modern English ideal — an ideal that was not matured till long after the age when the legendary Arthur reigned in a time

"That hovered between war and wantonness  
And crownings and dethronements."

So, too, the *Ulysses* of Tennyson is not so much a Greek as a Norseman, or a modern Englishman whose blood is stirred by the transmitted instincts of the old Vikings,

"Strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

This modernness of Tennyson has not been considered a merit by some of his critics. They think he should have striven to reproduce to the life the characters of whom he wrote; and they suggest that he could not escape from the ideas of the age in which he lived and of which he formed a part. What he might have done had his aim been different, it is, perhaps, impossible to say; but he chose to keep in close touch with the mind of his age, to express its best thoughts and feelings, and to lead his readers "on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." He strongly objected to the culture of 'art for art's sake.' In all his work as an artist he had a conscience and an aim, and followed by instinct as well as of set purpose the method of rising through the beautiful to the good.

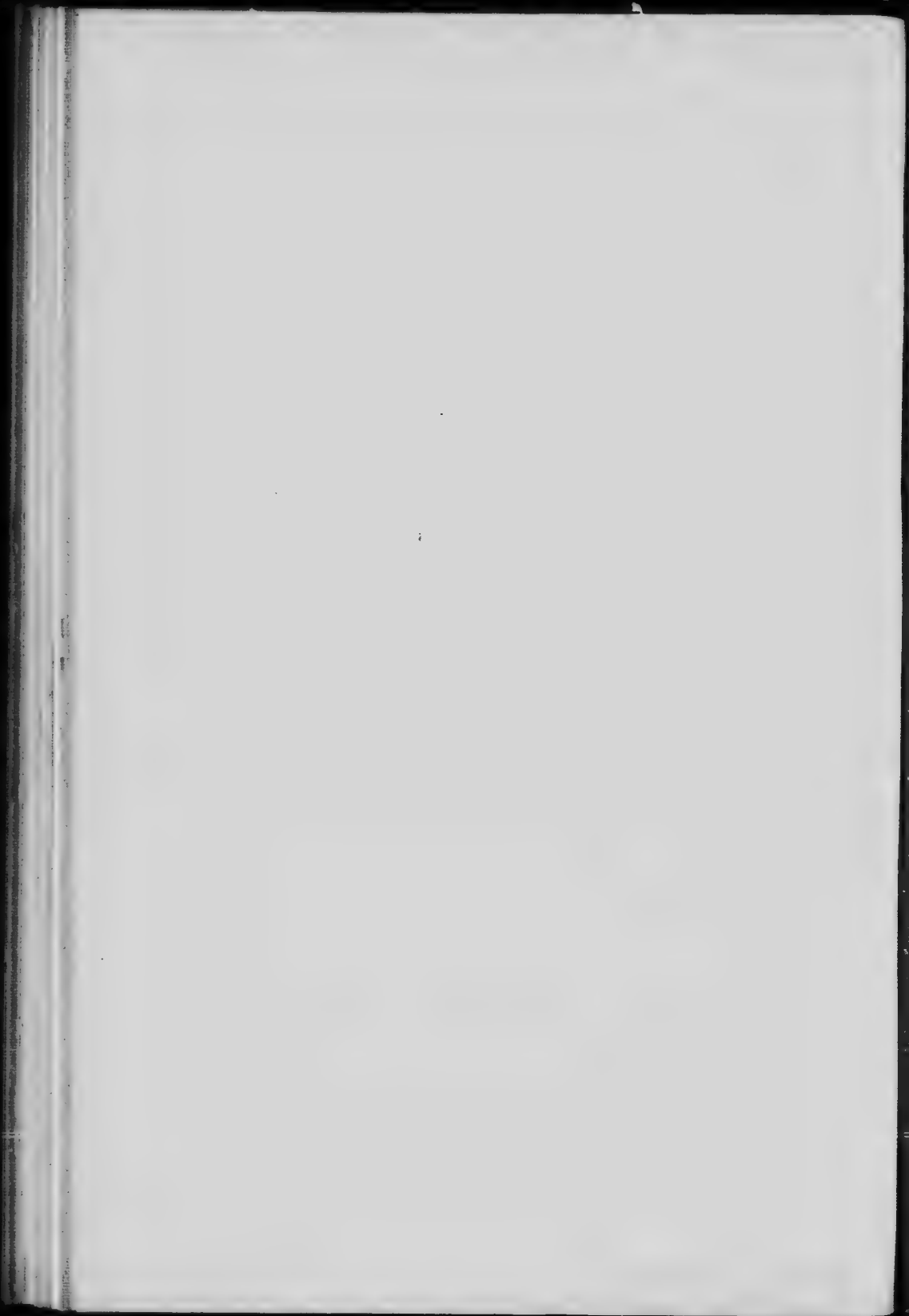


NOTES  
TO  
SELECT POEMS OF TENNYSON

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"Apt words have power to 'suage  
The tumults of a troubled mind."

MILTON.





## NOTES

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### THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

*Published in 1832.*

"What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

BURKE.

Tennyson was twenty-two years of age when he wrote this poem. It is his first effort based upon Arthurian legends. However, the poem as now presented is an elaborated revision of his first production. In the *Idyl of Lancelot and Elaine*, published twenty-seven years later, the Lady of Shalott is Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat, the lovely daughter of an honoured house. She is a lady whose life is intensely human and wonderfully pathetic. But the weird lady of Shalott, in her lonely castle, ever weaving before a magic mirror, and fearing to rest from weaving or look out upon the world lest a withering curse should fall upon her, is unnatural and incomprehensible. Yet the story pleases by its music and its wonderful word-pictures, and there is a charm in the lyrical fairy-tale itself. Some readers find a symbolism in the poem, but the meaning of the symbolism is not clear, and it is variously interpreted, as the fancy or experience of the readers may suggest.

"The key to this tale of magic 'symbolism' is of deep human significance, and is to be found in the lines :

'Or when the moon was overhead,  
Came two young lovers lately wed ;  
"I am half sick of shadows," said  
The Lady of Shalott.'

"Canon Ainger, in his *Tennyson for the Young*, quotes the following interpretation, given him by my father :

“‘The new-born love for something, for some one in the wide world from which she has been so long secluded, takes her out of the region of shadows into that of realities.’”

HALLAM, LORD TENNYSON.

“The poem perhaps surpasses everything else Tennyson has written, in the weird fascination it exercises over the reader's mind, at any rate if he happens to be a Celt.”

PROF. RHYS.

“The command of delicious metres; the rhythmic susurru of stanzas whose every word is as needful and studied as the flower or scroll of ornamental architecture, yet so much an interlaced portion of the whole, that the special device is forgotten in the general excellence; the effect of colour, of that music which is a passion in itself, of the scenic pictures which are the counterparts of changeful emotions; all are here, and the poet's work is the epitome of every mode in art. Even if these lyrics and idyls had expressed nothing, they were of priceless value as guides to the renaissance of beauty. Thenceforward slovenly work was impossible, subject to instant rebuke by contrast. The force of metrical elegance made its way and carried everything before it.”

STEDMAN.

#### PART I.

#### Page 5.

**wold**, undulating, treeless district.

**Camelot**, Arthur's capital.

**blow**, bloom, blossom.

**Willows whiten**. Willow-trees seem to grow white, or hoar, as the breeze makes visible the silvery undersurface of their leaves.

**aspens**. A species of poplar whose leaves are noted for a ceaseless tremulous motion. Hence the French name of the tree, *le tremble*.

**dusk**, make delicately dark as twilight. Little breezes ripple the smooth surface of the water into fairy wavelets as dark in colour as the dusk, or twilight. Dusk is rare as a verb.

**embowers**, imbowers, shelters secludedly and daintily.

**willow-veil'd**, prettily screened by willow-trees.

**barges**, large, flat-bottomed vessels. Here they are the freight boats, whilst the pleasure boats are called shallops.

**unhall'd**, not saluted.

**shallop**, light, open boat with masts rigged schooner-like.

**casement**, window-frame or window.

### Page 6.

**bearded**, prickly. The reference is to the long, stiff hairs, or spikes, on the ears of barley.

**cheerly**, archaic form of cheerily, cheerfully.

**clearly**, brightly and uninterruptedly.

### PART II.

**shadows of the world**, reflections from the mirror of the actual life outside of her castle. The lady has just such a vague idea of life as one has who knows life only from a study of pictures. Note the variety and contrasts of the objects reflected from the mirror.

**river eddy**, small whirlpool in a river.

**surly**, originally, Sir + like, i.e., domineering, arrogant; but, influenced, perhaps, by the resemblance to *sir* or *sour*, it has come to mean sour-like, uncivil, rude.

**churls**, A. S. *ceorls*, freemen of the lowest rank; hence, ill-bred rustics.

**pad**, originally, pad-nag, path-horse, an easy-paced saddle-horse, as though accustomed to paths only, not to roads. Cf., roadster.

**long-hair'd**. Long hair was of old a sign of high birth. Cf. the *love-locks* of the Cavaliers and the *round-heads* or closely-cropped heads of the Puritans.

### PART III.

### Page 7.

**He rode**. Note the suddenness with which this image is introduced.

**greaves**, armour for the shin or fore part of the leg between the knee and ankle. Greaves made of soft material are still worn by the Greeks.



**bold**, lion-like in courage, a common epithet of knights.

**red-cross**, the cross of St. George of England, a red cross on a white field.

**for ever kneel'd**. Denoting the constancy of a knight's devotion.

**yellow field**, the background of ripe golden grain.

**gemmy**, richly studied with jewels, so that the bridle seemed made of gems.

**free**, with rich sparkling brilliance of the bridle, held slackly and swaying.

**branch**, cluster, constellation.

**Galaxy**, the Milky Way, the Gk. *galaxias*, from *gala*, milk. Tennyson, as usual, avoids the common-place and calls it the *golden galaxy*.

**blazon'd**, richly embellished with heraldic devices.

**baldric**, belt worn across the breast from shoulder to waist.

**All**, quite. Modifies the phrase following.

**purple night**. Compare with the *blue unclouded weather* of the first line.

**bearded**. The rays of light emitted by the meteor are compared to the hair of the beard. Compare *comet*, from the Greek *comētēs*, derived from *comē*, hair.

## Page 8.

**burnish'd**, polished so as to have a conspicuous gloss.

**hooves, trode**. Archaic forms.

**From the bank and from the river**. Lancelot and his image in the stream were both reflected from the mirror.

**Tirra lirra**. the lark's warble. Lancelot is very light-hearted.

**loom**, weaving frame.

**She saw**. Not shadows now but realities.

**wide**, far away.

## PART IV.

**waning**, losing their gorgeous autumn garb. The lapse of time since she saw Lancelot is here suggested, with all that

it implies to the lady. Tennyson makes the season harmonize with the feeling.

**bold seer**, one who foresees by some supernatural power, and is resolved to face the worst.

**mischance**, ill luck.

**glassy**, rigid, expressionless.

**Page 9.**

**wharfs**, river-banks.

**royal cheer**, festivity of the king.

**cross'd themselves**, made the sign of the cross, invoking divine protection.

**mused a little space**. His gaiety gave place to serious thought, but it was only for a short time. There was no deep or personal interest in the scene to him.

**lend her grace**, vouchsafe her mercy.

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**Exercise.**

1. Were the fields of grain on one side only or on both sides?
2. Was it the length or the breadth of the fields that extended to the horizon?
3. How far is the road from the castle? What is the direction of the road relative to the river?
4. What kind of a city does "many-tower'd" suggest?
5. On which side of the Camelot road are the willow-trees?
6. Why does the lady weave only gay colours?
7. Who whispered to her that a curse would fall on her if she stopped her weaving?
8. What difference did it make to the lady that she did not know what the curse would be?
9. Why say the *red cloaks*, and not the *market girls*?
10. Why did the funeral pass at night?
11. Picture Lancelot as he rode by.
12. Why is Lancelot represented as gay in spirits?

13. How were there two reflections of Lancelot in the mirror?
14. What was the curse?
15. Describe Lancelot's shield?
16. Sketch the funeral suggested by "plumes and lights and music."
17. Describe the shallop suggested by silken-sail'd.
18. Describe the castle as you see it from the road.
19. Quote to show the mood of the lady in each of the four parts.
20. Show that the description of nature in each part harmonizes with the lady's mood.
21. Select all adjectives denoting colour and test their accuracy.
22. What time is supposed to elapse between Part III. and Part IV.?
23. Which of the four parts is the most picturesque?
24. Does the iambic or the trochaic rhythm predominate?
25. Is a stanza of nine verses especially appropriate?
26. Compare the rhythm of  
     "Slide the heavy barges trail'd."  
 and  
     "The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd."
27. What is the effect of the double rime?
28. Do Shalott and Camelot rime?
29. What is the effect of the refrain of the stanzas?

## THE LOTOS-EATERS.

*Published in 1832.**"Sluggish idleness—the nurse of sin."*

SPENSER.

*"There's life alone in duty done,  
And rest alone in striving."*

WHITTIER.

Ulysses was King of Ithaca, a small island off the western coast of Greece. Wishing to remain at home with his young wife, he pretended to be insane when all Greece was arming against Troy. He harnessed spirited coursers to his plough, made furrows on the sea-shore, and sowed salt instead of grain. To test Ulysses' sanity, his infant son, Telemachus, was suddenly placed in the way of the plough. In his anxiety to save his son, the father forgot to act as an insane man. Ulysses was then obliged to join the Greek captains before Troy.

The King of Ithaca rendered great services to the confederate Greek army by his prudence, courage, and skill. With him originated the idea of the famous wooden horse. Although the Greeks destroyed Troy, the victory was disastrous to the Greeks. The gods allowed none of the Grecian leaders to return home, except Ulysses, and before he reached Ithaca he had to struggle for ten weary years against violent tempests and vengeful gods. The adventure with the lotos-eater took place soon after he had commenced his homeward voyage.

After ten days of tempestuous seas and adverse winds, Ulysses touched the flowery coast of the lotos land. He sent out three men to learn the nature of the country. Those sailors were hospitably received by men

"Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest;  
They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast;  
The trees around them all their food produce;  
Lotos, the name; divine, nectareous juice!  
(Thence call'd Lotophagi); which whose tastes,  
Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,  
No other home, nor other care intends,  
But quits his house, his country, and his friends."

The three mariners were dragged from the enchanted lotos land, and were bound on board the ship. Ulysses and his companions hastened from the shore.

After a study of Tennyson's poem, it is easy to see that Homer's lines suggested the situation, the hatred of the strenuous life, and the apathy concerning friends and home and country. Those suggestions constituted the foundation of Tennyson's poem. On that foundation he fashioned his lordly pleasure-grounds of beauty. No doubt, while he was surveying and ornamenting, he consulted such masters as Theocritus, Bion, Moschus, Spenser, Thomson; but all the marvellously beauteous landscapes, reflecting the moods of the inhabitants of that bewitching paradise are triumphantly his own. It seems at times as though the onlooker were under the charm of the languid lotos; as though he had inhaled a whiff of the enervating odour. Then he redoubles his energy and gladly pushes forth into a sea where he earns his bread with the sweat of his brow.

The poem is divided into two parts, the prelude and the choric song. The prelude consists of five mellifluous Spenserian stanzas descriptive of the lotos land, its inhabitants, and its fruit.

"Then *some one* said, 'We will return no more';  
And all at once *they* sang, 'Our island home  
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam.'"

Was that "some one" a crafty lotos-eater, temptingly expressing the latent judgment of some of the sea-worn travellers? Or are the lotos-eaters too comatose even to tempt others? Was that "some one" a sailor weaker than his fellows? All those sailors under the spell answered the thought.

A choric song is sung by a whole company. The Greek chorus is often divided into strophe and antistrophe. In Tennyson's choric song the stanzas with the odd numbers, 1, 3, 5, 7, are chiefly in praise of luxurious ease in the lotos land; and the stanzas, 2, 4, 6, and 8 are full of drowsy murmurings and discontent. Is it probable that the lotos-eaters coaxingly sing the strophe to accentuate the delights of their land? And that the antistrophe is the consequent reasoning of such

mariners as are enchanted? Or are the spell-bound men divided into two bands: the weaker intent on the beauty of the land; the stronger still grumbling forth thoughts on the uselessness of effort? Or are the alternate stanzas the balancings of the situation by all the lotos-bound mariners?

In the even stanzas, the entrapped sailors seem to direct their remarks to the mariners not under the charm. Those remarks increase in quantity and in vicious quality. Do the scoffing mariners fondly believe that the gods will let such irreverent railings go unpunished? that the gods will allow men to live as gods?

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"*The Lotos-Eaters* has a weighty, solemn, thoughtful, classic close, embodying the Epicurean conception of the gods, bringing all Olympus down into harmony with the indifferent dreaming of the lotos-eaters, but leaving in our minds the sense of a dreadful woe tending on those that dream; for what the gods do with impunity, man may not do. Yet, even the lotos-eating gods inevitable fate awaits."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"In January, 1892, Dr. Parry stayed with us at Farringford, for he wished to hear my father read '*The Lotos-Eaters*,' which he was setting to music. For the first time my father's voice, usually so strong, failed while reading this poem. . . . Some one said to my father: 'No one has written finer things about music than you have done—

Music that gentler on the spirit lies  
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.'

And these he, too, thought were among his most successful lines. . . . He would say: 'I can feel the glory though I cannot follow the music. . . . It often seems to me that music must take up expression at the point where poetry leaves off, and expresses what cannot be expressed in words.'"

HALLAM TENNYSON.

"'*The Lotos-Eaters*' carries Tennyson's tendency to pure aestheticism to an extreme point. It is picture and music and nothing more. The writer did not suppose he was writing '*Hamlet*,' or solving 'the riddle of the painful earth.'"

. . . . To attempt to treat it as an allegory, which figures forth the tendency to abandon the battle of life . . . . is as monstrous and perverse as it would be to test a proposition of geometry by its rhythm and imagery. ' mood of feeling, of course, it represents, and feeling dependent on and directed to distinct objects,—in this latter respect alone differing from music."

BRIMLEY.

"Surely the philosophy of sad resignation—the *cui bono*, don't care, *nil admirari* mood, that wants only to rest—the morphia-crave of a generation that has made the circuit of science, art, philosophy, to be told at last by Schopenhauer that life is misery and the universe a failure—never found more appropriate expression."

BAYNE.

"Lotus-eaters were a Libyan tribe known to the Greeks as early as the time of Homer. Herodotus (IV. 177) describes their country as in the Syrtic district, and says that a caravan route led from it to Egypt. The lotus still grows there in great abundance. It is a prickly shrub, the jujube tree, bearing a fruit of a sweet taste, compared by Herodotus to that of the date. It is still eaten by the natives and a kind of wine is made from the juice. . . . Marvellous tales were current among the early Greeks of the virtues of the lotus. . . . This lotus must not be confounded with the Egyptian plant, a kind of water-lily that grows in the Nile."—*The Encyc. Brit.*

#### Page 10.

he said. Ulysses said.

And like a downward smoke. Note the alliterations and assonances in these lines and also the harmony between the movement of the lines and the movement of the stream.

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn. Tennyson wrote to a friend: "When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among these mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words:—

'Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.'

When I printed this, a critic informed me that 'lawn' was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall, and

graciously added, 'Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre, but to nature herself for his suggestions.' And I had gone to nature herself. I think it is a moot point whether—if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage—I should have ventured to publish the line."

**Up-clomb**, obsolete for up-climbed.

**cruse**, curtailed from coppice—a thicket of dwarfed trees.

**charmed sunset**. The sun itself seemed to feel the charm and linger and stand still.

**down**. From the O. E. *dun*, a hill.

**galingale**, the *cyperus papyrus*, or paper plant. It is found in the tropics. Out of it the ancients made writing paper. It grows as high as ten feet. It has light green fragrant flowers.

**And music... make**. The rhythmic pulsations of his heart sounded as music to him.

**Page 11.**

CHORIC SONG.

I.

**poppy hangs in sleep**. The tropical poppy is the source of the opium of commerce.

II.

**the first of things**, the noblest or highest of creatures.

**Still, always, ever**.

**Page 12.**

V.

**myrrh-bush**, shrub with scanty foliage, small green flowers, and small oval fruit.

**crisping**, curling.

**Page 13.**

VI.

**inherit us**, now are in possession of our estates.

VII.

**amaranth**, fabulous never-fading flower.

**moly**, fabulous herb with black root and white flower. It is a magical counter-charm.



**acanthus**, a tall shrub, with large, graceful spiny leaves. This leaf forms the well-known ornament of the Corinthian capital.

**divine**, fit in beauty for the gods.

### Page 14.

**equal**, constant, unchanging.

**hollow**, full of valleys. Compare with the description in the first stanza of the poem, and also with line 4 of Choric Song VIII.

**careless**, having no anxious care.

**nectar**, drink of the gods.

**bolts**, thunderbolts. Zeus wielded the thunder.

**gleaming world**, starry heavens.

**little dues**, scanty returns of much labour.

**Elysian**, pertaining to Elysium, the heaven of the Greeks.

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### Exercise.

1. "Full-faced above the valley stood the moon." Why stood? Cf. *sunset linger'd*, in third stanza.

2. "Downward smoke." Explain.

3. Is *veils* in l. 11 nominative or objective?

4. Does *slumberous* in l. 13 suggest the lazy movement or the roar and surge?

5. "Aged snow" (l. 16). What is the word used in ordinary prose to express the thought conveyed by *aged*?

6. Show that the following expressions are not tautological: "dew'd with showery drops," "the roof and crown of things," "portions and parcels of the dreadful Past," "climbing up the climbing wave," "to muse and brood and live again in memory," "enough of action, and of motion."

7. "Shadowy pine" (line 19); "shadowy granite" (Choric Song I.). Explain *shadowy*.

8. "Dark faces pale against that rosy flame." Are they facing the sunset or the moon?

9. "Mild-eyed melancholy" (l. 27 ; "mild-minded melancholy" (Choric Song v.). Which indicates most clearly the effect of the Lotos ?

10. "Laden with flower and fruit" (l. 29). Account for this abnormal condition.

11. Which sense is benumbed first by the lotos ?

12. Where is the supposed describer of the lotos-land as it is pictured in the prelude ? Select words that show the scale of the artist. Reproduce the description in prose.

13. Which of the similes in Choric Song I. is the most suggestive of utter gentleness and softness ?

14. Answer the questions asked in the second stanza of the choric song as the "inner spirit" of the spell-bound would dictate ; and then as the "inner spirit" of Ulysses would dictate.

15. Show that the reasoning about the leaf, the apple, and the flower in the third stanza of the choric song is fallacious, and note the significance of the expression *fast-rooted*, in the last line.

16. Answer the questions in the fourth stanza from your own point of view.

17. Why repeat, "Let us alone" ?

18. "With those old faces," etc. What two methods of disposal of the dead are here described ? Note the euphemism.

19. What is meant by "pilot-stars" ?

20. Find in the last stanza a line expressing the thought suggested by "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

21. Quote single felicitous verses.

22. Select lines where the tone-colour is excellent.

23. Why is the Spenserian stanza not suitable for the choric song ?

24. Find the shortest and the longest metrical line in the choric song.

25. Why is the rhythm markedly changed in VIII. of the choric song ?

## CENONE.

"To err is human, to forgive divine."

POPE.

To the marriage feast of King Peleus and the sea nymph Thetis, there were invited all the gods and goddesses except Eris, the goddess of discord. When the feast was at its height, Eris entered and cast on the banqueting table a golden apple, inscribed "For the fairest." Herè, Pallas, and Aphrodîtè claimed the apple. To decide to which it belonged, Jupiter ordered the goddesses to go to Mount Gargarus, and to submit to the judgment of Paris. The goddesses tried to influence the judgment of Paris by bribes. Herè promised wealth and the sovereignty of Asia; Pallas, glory in war; Aphrodîtè, the fairest woman in Greece for a wife. Paris unhesitatingly gave the apple to Aphrodîtè. He deserted Cènone, sailed to Sparta, and abducted Helen, wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta. To avenge this wrong the Greeks, under Agamemnon, brother of Menelaus, besieged and destroyed Troy.

At the capture of Troy, Paris was wounded by a poisoned arrow. He returned to Cènone and asked her to cure him by a remedy which she alone possessed. Cènone refused. Paris returned to Troy. Cènone repented too late to save his life. In remorse, she killed herself.

As soon as Tennyson has given a charming description of a valley in Mount Ida, which description, he says, was written when he was in the Pyrenees, he allows Cènone herself to tell the story of her grief and wrongs. She is very beautiful and deeply in love with her faithless husband, who has so cruelly deserted her. But Tennyson represents her as free from the implacable vengeance of the Cènone of Greek literature.

The poem is the first of Tennyson's Idyls. It contains many improvements made after 1832. It is an imitation of the style of Theocritus. The student may spend time profitably in studying the expressions Tennyson seems to catch from that great master of Greek pastorals, in comparing Tennyson's first production with its final form, and in watching Tennyson breathe a modern spirit into the dry bones of mythical antiquity.

"*Enone* wails melodiously for Paris without the remotest suggestion of fierceness or revengeful wrath. She does not upbraid him for having preferred to her the fairest and most loving wife in Greece, but wonders how any one could love him better than she does. A Greek poet would have used his whole power of expression to instil bitterness into her resentful words. . . . That forgiveness of injuries could be anything but weakness—that it could be honourable, beautiful, brave—is an entirely Christian idea; and it is because this idea, although it has not yet practically conquered the world, although it has indeed but slightly modified the conduct of nations, has nevertheless secured recognition as ethically and socially right, that Tennyson could not hope to enlist the sympathy and admiration of his readers for his *Enone*, if he had cast her image in the tearless bronze of Pagan obduracy."

BAYNE.

"His pathetic feeling was manifest in 'The Lady of Shalott'; his classicism in '*Enone*'; his idyllic method, especially, now defined itself, making the scenery of a poem enhance the central idea.—thought and landscape being so blended that it was difficult to determine which suggested the other. '*Enone*,' modelled upon the new-Doric verse, ranks with 'Lycidas' as an Hellenic study."

STEDMAN.

#### NOTES ON THE PROPER NAMES IN *ENONE*.

**Aphroditè**, the foam-born: the goddess of love and beauty. Her Roman name is Venus. She was made out of the foam of the sea. Her first home was in Paphos, a town in Cyprus. Hence, she is often called Paphia. The goddess had a favorite seat in Idalium, a mountain-city in Cyprus.

**Cassandra**, daughter of King Priam of Troy. Apollo granted to her the gift of prophesying, but to punish her for breaking faith with him, he ordained that no one should believe her prophecies. Her most famous prophecy was that Troy would be destroyed by the Greeks. In consequence of that prophecy, the Trojans believed her insane and confined her as a madwoman.

**Eris**, the goddess of strife, the Abominable.

**Gargarus**. See *Ida*.

**Herè**, Juno, queen of heaven, sister and consort of Jupiter, or Zeus. Her chariot was drawn by peacocks.

**Hesperian**, adjective formed from **Hesperides**, fabulous gardens of the Daughters of Night. The gardens were at the extreme west of the world. The golden apples were guarded by the dragon Ladon.

**Ida**, a great mountain range. It forms the southern boundary of Troas. In the mountain range were the sources of many rivers and streams. Hence came the epithet, "many-fountain'd Ida." One of the famous rivers whose source is in Ida is the Simois. Gargarus is one of the highest summits. It reaches an altitude of 500 feet.

**Idalian**. See Aphroditè.

**Ilion**, another name for Troy.

**Ionian**, relating to Ionia, a cluster of Greek islands. Ionia was also applied to the neighbouring coast of Asia Minor.

**Iris**, messenger of gods. Juno rewarded the faithful work of Iris by metamorphosing her into the rainbow.

**Cenone**, daughter of the river-god Ketren.

**Oread**, mountain nymph.

**Pallas**, the Roman Minerva, goddess of wisdom and art. She was the tutelary divinity of Athens.

**Paphian**. See Aphroditè.

**Paris**, son of Priam, King of Troy. His mother, Hecuba, was warned in a dream that Paris would bring misfortune to Troy. To get rid of him, he was exposed on Mount Ida, but was found by a shepherd who brought up the boy as his own son. Hence, Paris is often called the Idaean shepherd. He was very beautiful in form, but was base in mind and heart.

**Peleus**, King of Thessaly and father of the invincible Achilles. Peleus married the Nereid Thetis.

**Simois**. See Ida.

**Troas**, district surrounding the city of Troy.

**Troy**, a large, rich, and well-fortified city on the western coast of Asia Minor. It was destroyed by the Greeks after a siege of ten years, 1184 B.C.

**Page 15.**

**swimming vapor**, mist moving with a smooth and waving motion suggestive of swimming.

**athwart**, across.

**puts forth an arm**. This carries on the metaphor expressed in "swimming vapor." Cf. "He that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands." Isa. xxv. 11.

**lawns**, untilled districts between woods.

**In cataract**, etc. Note movement of the line.

**topmost Gargarus**, Latinism for the summit of Gargarus.

**Stands up and takes the morning**. The head of the mountain is resplendent with the first flush of the rising sun.

**crown**, chief glory.

**Forlorn of**. *For* means utterly; *lorn*, lost; hence, bereft. Paris has deserted her for ever.

**seem'd to float in rest**, as though her beautiful hair had caught its undulations from the ripples of the stream.

**fragment**, broken rock. Cf. page 20, in "the ruined folds, Among the fragments tumbled from the glens." Tennyson's first reading was "vine-entwined stone."

**stillness**, the silent scene surrounding her.

**till the mountain shade**, etc. Till the sun had sunk so far behind the mountain that the shadow of the mountain crept to a cliff above where Enone was sitting. She could see the line where light and shade met. That line extended from the cliff to her seat.

**Mother Ida**. Cf. motherland, mother country.

**many-fountain'd**. See Ida.

**The cicala sleeps**. This reading is now changed to *The winds are dead*. The sleeping of the cicala is too much like the silence of the grasshopper mentioned two lines before, moreover the expression is not euphonious.

**cold crown'd snake**, provided with a crest, or hood, which resembles a royal crown.

**Page 16.**

**build-up....song.** Build around me a fortification by means of which my deeper woe may for a time be kept back.

"But for the unquiet heart and brain,  
A use in measured language lies;  
The sad mechanic exercise,  
Like dull narcotics, numbing pain."

—*In Memoriam.*

**as yonder walls, etc.** Jupiter ordered Apollo to serve Laomedon, King of Troy. Under the magic influence of Apollo's lyre, the king saw a massive stone wall rise round the city: just as a cloud passes from unsubstantial specks to a definite mass.

**white hooved, archaic** for with white hoofs.

**solitary morning.** Aurora is alone on the snowy heights remote from living beings.

**white-breasted....dawn.** Enone compares Paris to the morning star that always precedes Aurora.

**foam-bow, a phenomenon** often seen over Niagara Falls and wherever the sunlight strikes through the spray.

**ambrosially, like ambrosia, the food of the gods.** It had a unique fragrance.

**beautiful-brow'd.** Cf. "married brows." The ancient Greeks thought that meeting eyebrows were very beautiful.

**Page 17.**

**board, banqueting table.**

**full-faced presence.** All the gods and goddesses were present—Eris excepted—and all saw Eris cast down the apple.

**Ranged, sitting in order of dignity.**

**Delivering, saying, or delivering the message.**

**meed of fairest, prize for the most beautiful.**

**at their feet, etc.** So Homer speaks of the flowers springing up under the feet of the goddesses. Cf. Wordsworth in the "Ode to Duty":—

"Flowers laugh before thee on their beds  
And fragrance in thy footing treads."

**amaracus**, marjoram.

**asphodel**, a kind of lily. The English word daffodil is derived from asphodel, but the plant is not the same.

**Lotos**. (See note on Lotos-eaters, page 86.)

**a crested peacock**. This bird was sacred to Herè or Juno.

**Page 18.**

**O'erthwarted**, crossed.

**Page 19.**

**Sequel of guerdon**, the consequence of a reward. If the award were given to her by Paris, that would not make her fairer.

**Unblass'd by self-profit**, uninfluenced by hope of gain.

**Until . . . freedom**. Until the power of enduring the trials of life become strong by frequent exercise, and until the fully-developed will, made perfect by varied experiences, grow into pure law and mean the same thing as perfect freedom. *Grow* and *commensure* are subjunctives. They indicate indefinite time. Pallas does not say at what time Paris would reach the perfection wherein law and liberty would be the same.

**Page 20.**

**wild and wanton pard**, etc. A wild and untamed leopard, with bright, shining eyes, became gentle and affectionate at sight of her. Beauty, especially spiritual beauty, was said to tame wild beasts. In Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, the furious lion rushed at Una, but, catching sight of her beauty,

"His bloody rage assuag'd with remorse  
And, with the sight amaz'd, forgot his furious force.  
Instead thereof he kissed her weary feet,  
And lick'd her lily hands with fawning tongue.  
As he her wronged innocence did weet,  
O how can beauty master the most strong.  
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!"

**Simois**. See note on Ida, page 91.

**They . . . pines**. To build ships to convey Paris and his followers to Greece to find the fair lady. See note on Eris, page 92.



**The Abominable....Peleian banquet hall.** See note on Peleus, page 92.

**Page 21.**

**fiery thoughts, revengeful thoughts.**  
**catch the issue, apprehend the result.**  
**ancient love, former lover.**

**NOTE ON THE DEATH OF CENONE.**

Tennyson died Oct. 6, 1892. A few weeks later his last volume was published. It contained amongst other poems one entitled "The Death of CEnone," of which the following outline is given in Luce's Handbook:—"As we left the lonely mountain nymph of the earlier poem, the noise of battle was ringing in our ears. Now the ten years' war of Troy is over; but in her cave CEnone still sits desolate; the wandering ivy and vine that hung in rich festoons are dead cords dripping with the wintry mist. Through these her sad eyes look down the long glen, or rest on the naked bower where once she saw her Paris judge the gods. On a sudden he comes again, no longer beautiful as a god, but livid, moaning, pierced by a poisoned dart. Only CEnone may heal his wound [but she cries] 'Go back to thine adulteress and die.' He groaned, turned, passed downward through the mist, fell headlong dead. The mountain shepherds came; they built for their old playmate a funeral pyre. In her dream she heard a wailing, 'Come to me, CEnone!' Led by the silent cry and the low gleam of death, she paced the torrent path to the broader vale, came to the pile, cast herself upon it, and passed in fire with him."

**Exercise.**

1. Reproduce in prose a picture of the valley of Ida.
2. Picture CEnone before she begins to speak to Mother Ida.
3. Picture Paris as CEnone sees him when he is delivering judgment.
4. Select examples of compound epithets.

5. Compare, as to coloring, the pictures of Pallas and Aphrodite.

6. Which of the three goddesses was the most tactful in dealing with Paris?

7. Tell in your own words what each goddess said to Paris.

8. Which of the three speeches has most of the modern spirit?

9. "I am all aweary of my life." What is the purpose of the prefix in *awear*y?

10. "O Caves that house the cold crown'd snake." How did Ænone come to think of the snake?

11. "The torrent call'd me." Why should the torrent call Ænone?

12. "The grasshopper is silent in the grass." Compare Keats' lines:—

"The poetry of earth is never dead:  
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,  
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead:  
That is the grasshopper's—he takes the lead  
In summer luxury,—he has never done  
With his delights, for, when tired out with fun,  
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed."

13. Show that the iambic pentameter blank verse is suitable for an idyll.

14. What is the effect of the refrain?

15. Select single lines wherein sense and sound are well blended.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR.

*Published in 1862.*

"None but himself can be his parallel."

THEOBALD.

By some, Arthur is believed to be a personage of British, French, and Welsh mythology. Others claim that he was an ideal warrior-king of the sixth century, and ruled a district between the Severn and the Clyde. The historian Malory is Tennyson's authority. Yet, Tennyson's handling of Malory would not satisfy an antiquarian. Tennyson retells and recolours the Arthurian legends, and breathes into them the breath of modern life. His aim is to shadow "sense at war with soul,"—evil striving against good. The mood of the poet is on the whole optimistic. He believes that good must prevail as the world rolls on and the old gives place to new. Arthur will come again in the nobler manhood and higher life of the coming age, and Heaven will give each active champion of the truth a charmed Excalibur. Soul will yet gain the mastery over sense, and every thought be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It is the same teaching as that of the *In Memoriam*:

"Ring in the valiant man and free,  
 'Till he larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
 Ring out the darkness of the land,  
 Ring in the Christ that is to be."

Modred, Arthur's unprincipled nephew, discovered the guilty love of the beautiful queen Guinevere and Lancelot, the knight of knights. Guinevere fled to a convent and Arthur marched against Lancelot. In the king's absence, Modred joined hands with the heathen, and raised a revolt against Arthur. In the great battle of Lyonesse, Arthur crushed the rebels. Modred was slain with one stroke of Excalibur, but the king received a deadly wound. It is the story of his passing that the poem relates.

"How much of history we have in the story of Arthur is doubtful. Let not my readers press too hardly on details, whether for history or for allegory. Some think that King Arthur may be taken to typify conscience. He is anyhow meant to be a man who spent himself in the cause of honour, duty, and self-sacrifice, who felt and aspired with his nobler knights, though with a stronger and a clearer conscience than any of them, 'reverencing his conscience as his king.' 'There was no such perfect man since Adam,' as an old writer says. *Major poteritis majorque futura Regibus.*"

HALLAM TENNYSON.

"Tennyson filled and sustained his subjects with thoughts which were as modern as they were ancient. While he placed his readers in Camelot, Ithaca, or Ida, he made them feel also that they were standing in London, Oxford, or an English woodland. When the Morte d'Arthur is finished, the hearer of it sits rapt. . . . The old tale, thus modernized in an epilogue, does not lose its dignity."

STOFFORD BROOKE.

"If it is to give an exact historical account of certain events, then, of course, every modern touch in an ancient story, every reflection of the present into the past, is a blemish. But if the object of poetry is to bring out the meaning of human life, to quicken the dead bones of narrative with a vital spirit, to show us character and action in such a way that our hearts shall be moved and purified by pity and fear, anger and love; then certainly it is not only lawful, but inevitable, that the poet should throw into his work the thoughts and emotions of his own age. For these are the only ones that he has studied from the life."

VAN DYKE.

"I hold the verse of 'Morte d'Arthur' to be his own invention, derived from the study of Homer and his natural mastery of the Saxon element in our language. Milton's Latinism is so pronounced as to be un-English; on the other hand, there is such affinity between the simple strength of the Homeric Greek and that of the English in which Saxon words prevail, that the former can be rendered into the latter with great effect. Tennyson recognizes this in his prelude to 'Morte

d'Arthur,' deprecating his heroics as 'faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth.' But almost with the perusal of the first two lines, we see that this style surpasses other blank-verse in strength and condensation. It soon became the model for a score of younger aspirants; in short, impressed itself upon the artistic mind as a new and vigorous form of our grandest English measure."

STEDMAN.

The Epic, or at least the *Morte d'Arthur* portion of it, was written seven years before the volume of 1812. Edward Fitzgerald writes: "The '*Morte d'Arthur*,' when read to us from manuscript in 1835, had no introduction or epilogue; which was added to anticipate or excuse the 'faint Homeric echoes,' etc. (as in the '*Day Dream*'), to give a reason for telling an old-world tale."

Again:—Mouthing out his hollow oes and aes, deep-chested music, this is something as A. T. reads, with a broad north country vowel. . . . His voice very deep and deep-chested, but rather murmuring than mouthing, like the sound of a far sea or of a pine-wood, I remember greatly struck Carlyle when he first came to know him.

LIFE, Vol. I., page 194.

In 1870, when Tennyson published the "*Passing of Arthur*," he introduced the *Morte d'Arthur* precisely as it was given in 1812. This is very significant, for Tennyson was in the habit of making incessant changes and corrections in the successive editions of his poems, but the *Morte d'Arthur* was apparently in his judgment as perfect as he could make it.

#### NOTES ON THE PROPER NAMES IN THE MORTE D'ARTHUR.

**Avilion**, the Celtic legendary habitation of the blest. The name is said to mean the isle of apples (aval, apple; others derive the name from Avallon, a Celtic god of death. Avilion was thought of as a valley nearly surrounded by a river; hence, an island-valley. It has been identified with a valley near the town of Glastonbury, in Somersetshire. That valley is almost encircled by the river Bret. Of course, Tennyson's Avilion is Utopian.

**Bedivere**, the first knight dubbed by Arthur. He was called bold because boldness was his special virtue, *i.e.*, he was brave in heart and word and act, especially when slander was spoken against Arthur.

**Camelot**, Arthur's capital. It is said to be identified with a village called Queen Camel, Somersetshire.

**Excalibur**. The origin and significance of the word remain doubtful. Malory says it means *cut steel*. Professor Rhys takes the Irish *Caladbolg* as the original, and suggests the translation *voracious, all-devouring*. This harmonizes with the name given by Spenser to the charmed sword, *viz.*, *moeldur*, or *hard-hiter*.

" The sword  
That rose from out the bosom of the lake,  
And Arthur rowed across and took it—rich  
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,  
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so bright  
That men are blinded by it—on one side,  
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,  
'Take me,' but turn the blade and ye shall see,  
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,  
'Cast me away!'"

— *The Coming of Arthur.*

**Lyonnesse**, a fabulous land stretching westward from Cornwall. It is now submerged, and the Scilly Isles are all that remain above the sea—

" A land of old upheaven from the abyss  
By fire, to sink into the abyss again."

**Maiden of the Lake**, a beauteous lady that dwelt in the depths of the lake:—

" Down in a deep; calm, whatsoever storm  
May shake the world, and when the surface rolls,  
Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord."

She gave Arthur the Excalibur and was present at his coronation.

**Merlin**, a famous magician favourable to Arthur. Merlin made the round table to imitate the shape of the round world. A table still preserved at Winchester is said to be Arthur's table.

**Three queens**. One was Arthur's sister, Morgan le Fay; another was queen of Northgalis (Wales); the other was queen

of the Waste Lands. They are said to typify Faith, Hope, and Charity. They appeared for the first time at Arthur's coronation :—

" Three fair Queens,  
Who stood in silence near his throne, the friends  
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright  
Sweet faces, who will help him at his need."

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#### THE EPIC.

An *epic* is a poetic narrative dealing with a long and complicated series of events, and relating the great exploits and adventures of real or imaginary personages. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* stand at the head of epic literature. Virgil followed the Greek master with his *Æneid* in twelve books, and later came Dante and Milton.

Tennyson seems to have contemplated an epic in twelve books on King Arthur, but he rightly judged that modern readers required something shorter and simpler. Accordingly he put his story of King Arthur into the form of twelve short epics or *Idylls* [the Greek word means little images or pictures], each of which is complete in itself, but the whole build up a larger unity, of which the central figure is King Arthur.

**sacred bush**, mistletoe hallowed by Druids.

**wassail-bowl**. Wassail is from the Saxon *was* and *hal* :: be hale or healthy. It was a salutation in drinking. The liquor drunk on such occasions was made of apples, sugar, and ale. That liquor came to be called wassail. The wassail-bowl is the vessel used to contain the liquor.

**harping**, repeating the same thing tiresomely.

**hawking**, soaring, as the hawk does after prey.

**Mastodon**, a huge, extinct quadruped, allied to the elephant, and known only by its fossil remains.

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**draff**, refuse, dregs ; anything vile and worthless.

## MORTE D'ARTHUR.

## The Death of Arthur.

**man by man.** *By means after.*

**chancel.** Lat. *cancelli*, cross-bar. A screen of lattice work often separates the body of the church from the choir and altar. The part thus railed off from the body of the church is called the chancel.

**great water.** "This phrase has probably often been ridiculed as affected phraseology for 'a great lake,' but it is an instance of the intense presentative power of Mr. Tennyson's genius. It precisely marks the appearance of a large lake outspread and taken in at one glance from a high ground. Had 'a great lake' been substituted for it, the phrase would have needed to be translated by the mind into water of a certain shape and size, before the picture was realized by the imagination. 'A great lake' is, in fact, one degree removed from the sensuous to the logical—from the individual appearance to the generic name, and is, therefore, less poetic and pictorial."—BRIMLEY. Moreover, water is used in the same sense by Malory, and is still used in the north of England for lake.

**sequel,** what follows as the result.

**unsolders,** breaks a solid body into pieces; hence, disunites.

**fellowship,** company, association, society.

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**brand,** poetic for sword. When the steel flashes, the sword resembles a burning shaft of wood. Malory says that Excalibur flashed forth a light as bright as that from thirty torches.

**samite,** rich silk stuff interwoven with gold or silver thread. Greek *hex*, six, and *mitos*, thread; woven of six threads.

**I am sung or told,** my deeds are recounted in song or in story.

**into middle mere,** into the middle of the mere, or lake.

**lightly.** Borrowed from Mallory, who uses it in the sense of quickly.



meet, fit, proper, becoming

hest, obsolete form of behest, command.

at full, thoroughly.

keen with frost, brightly because of the frosty air.

topaz and jacinth, jewels of various colours.

subtlest jewellery, skilfully wrought in artistic designs.

**This way and that . . . . mind.** He is thinking quickly whether he will fling the sword away or hide it. Tennyson's line is said to be a distinct Virgilian echo of *Atque animum nunc huc celerem nunc dirigit illuc*.

**In act to throw,** on the point of throwing.

**water-flags,** aquatic blossoming plants, often three feet high. They are of the genus *Iris*.

**many-knotted.** The epithet tickles the ear of the botanist as it recalls the knots in the roots, the flower-stalks, the seed-pods, and the intertwining of the sword-blade leaves.

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**I heard . . . . crag.** "The ripple washing in the reeds' and the 'wild water lapping on the crags,' are two phrases marking exactly the difference of sound produced by water swelling up against a permeable or impermeable barrier."—BRIMLEY. Cf. Malory's version, "I saw nothing but waters wap (beat) and the waves wan (ebb)."

**thy nature,** innate love of truth.

**thy name,** Arthur's Knight. Each knight took the oath—

"To honour his own word as if his God's."

**lief,** archaic for beloved. The word is still used in the expression, I had as lief.

**curiously.** The word is used here in the original sense, carefully.

**chased,** engraved.

**obedience is the bond of rule.** Unless the people obey the law-giver, there can be no constitutional government. Obedience of the people is therefore the bond that unites king and subjects.

**empty breath,** impalpable, unsubstantial verbal traditions.

**rumours of a doubt**, vague statements about a king whose very existence is doubted.

**joust**. Lat. *juxta*, near; hence, *tournaments* where knights meet in personal encounters.

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**conceit**, conception, notion—its original meaning.

**Authority . . . . king**. "The personification assists the imagination without distressing the understanding; deepening the impressiveness of the sentiment by giving along with a true thought a grand picture."—BRIMLEY.

**offices**, duties, services.

**prosper**, succeed because he does his duty.

**streamer of the northern morn**, a ray of the Aurora (dawn) Borealis (northern).

**moving isles of winter shock**, floating icebergs collide.  
**dipt**, went under.

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**wistfully**, wishfully, longingly.

**Clothed . . . . hills**. The mist could make him appear of more than natural size. There is no mention of mist in this poem, but in "The Passing of Arthur" we are told "A death-white mist slept over sand and sea." On the other hand, we require a clear light when "the great brand made lightnings in the splendour of the moon."

**Dry**, harshly and abruptly; with no liquidity and modulation.

**Harness**, body-armour.

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**ware**, aware.

**dense**, crowded.

**stoled**. The stole is a loose robe reaching to the feet. The clerical stole is a scarf reaching to the knees.

**A cry . . . . stars**. "The cry comes from a company of spirits amid mountains whose natural power of echo is

heightened by the silence of night, the clearness of the winter air and the hardening effects of frost. Such a cry, at such a time, and in such a place, would thrill from rock to rock, from summit to summit, till it seemed to pierce the sky in a hurtling storm of multitudinous arrow sounds, and die away in infinitely distant pulsations among the stars."—BRIMLEY.

**Greaves, shin-armour.**

**Cuisses, thigh-armour.**

**knightly growth.** "Virgil's good taste would have preserved him from such extravagances as the knightly growth for a moustache."—COLLINS.

**lance in rest, lance in position ready for the attack.**

**the holy Elders, the Magi who came to Bethlehem, and presented to the child Jesus their offerings of gold, frankincense and myrrh.**

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**days darken, future seems dark.**

**Lest one good custom, etc.** The letter may overgrow the spirit and the life pass out of the form.

### Exercise.

1. What thoughts in the epic are autobiographic?
2. "He thought that nothing new was said, or else  
Something so said 'twas nothing—that a truth  
Looks freshest in the fashion of the day."  
  - (a) Does Tennyson say anything new in "Morte d'Arthur"?
  - (b) Make a list of the truths expressed in the fashion of the day.
  - (c) Is it the thought in "Morte d'Arthur," or the expression, that is most striking?
3. What device in the first line of "Morte d'Arthur" keeps up the fiction that the poem is the eleventh book of an epic?
4. Why is the form of the twelve Idylls into which Tennyson put the King Arthur story better suited to modern times than the old form of an epic in twelve books?

5. "A broken chancel with a broken cross." What may you deduce is the condition of the rest of the church?
6. "A strait of barren land." What is the common geographical word for which Tennyson substitutes *strait*?
7. Select from the poem twelve expressions that make excellent proverbs.
8. Select passages in which the agreement of sense and sound is very striking. Is the effect due to vowels or to consonants?
9. What expressions used by the poet indicate that Arthur is sinking and passing away?
10. "Counting the dewy pebbles" Is this natural under the circumstances?
11. "Smote his palms together."
  - (a) What does this indicate?
  - (b) Does Bedivere try to find out what he ought to do, or does he seek a reason for doing what he wants to do?
  - (c) Should he have reasoned at all?
  - (d) What is his real reason for not throwing the sword?
  - (e) What is his feigned reason?
12. "There hove a dusky barge." Supply the ellipsis after *hove*.
13. "Black-stoled . . . like a dream." Was the likeness in the vagueness of the forms or in the unearthly situation?
14. What does Arthur say of prayer and friendship?
15. Show that the scenic background and the Christmastide harmonize with Arthur's passing away.
16. How are you impressed by the blending of Christian and pagan sentiments?
17. What became of Sir Bedivere?
18. Give the substance of Arthur's last sayings from the barge, and show by what spirit they are dominated—the spirit of doubt or the spirit of faith.
19. The epic states that "all the old honour had from Christmas gone," and the epilogue closes with the ringing of Christmas bells. Is this consistent?

## 20. Homeric echoes are :—

- (1) Nobility of theme.
- (2) All interest focused about the hero.
- (3) Martial progression of narration.
- (4) Vigour of diction.
- (5) Frequent repetition of lines.
- (6) Habit of mentioning specific details: *e.g.*, never more, at any future time; am sung or told; both his eyes; hide my forehead and my eyes; slay thee with my hands.
- (7) Permanent epithets: *e.g.*, the *bold* Sir Bedivere.
- (8) Classic words and constructions: *e.g.*, levels; the middle mere; in act to throw; deep-meadow'd; three lives of mortal men.
- (9) Borrowed thoughts, *e.g.*, bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
- (10) Versification.

Write more particularly on the points here specified and give further examples in illustration.

ULYSSES.

*Published in 1842.*

According to Homer, the goddess Pallas made a lasting peace between the returned Ulysses and his subjects. The Brave Telemachus and the faithful Penelope rejoiced ;

" And willing nations knew their lawful lord."

Dante, in his imagined interview with Ulysses in the spirit world, receives from him the following account of the last adventure : —

" When I could tear  
From Circe, who for more than one year's space,  
Held by Gaeta, hid me and forbade  
To part, ere so Æneas named the place,  
Nor tenderness for son, nor reverence had  
For father now grown old, nor plighted love  
That should have made Penelope so glad,  
Could overcome within me, or e'en move  
The passion felt to know the whole world through,  
And all men's virtues and their vices prove,  
So I sailed out to sea on voyages new,  
With one bark only, and in company  
With some who would not leave me, a small crew,  
I saw both shores to Spain successively,  
And to the Moors, and the Sardinian isle  
Was touched at, and all circled by that sea.  
I and my mates, grown old and slow meanwhile,  
Arrived at last, where Hercules has set  
Pillars as tokens by the sea-defile,  
That men no further might presume to get.  
I stood out, leaving Seville to the right,  
And Centa on the left much further yet ;  
' O brothers, that through perils infinite,'  
I said, ' came hither to the Western Main,  
To such small waking season ere the night,  
As to your senses may unspent remain,  
Grudge not the knowledge of unpeopled Earth,  
That, following the sun, you may attain,  
Bear in remembrance your most noble birth,  
Not to live like the brutes were ye born men,  
But to pursue all science and all worth.'  
All my companions grew so eager then,  
Through that small speech, to prosecute the way,  
I scarcely could have turned them back again,  
Keeping the stern towards the rise of day,

We made us wings of ours for that mad flight :  
 Our course still gaining southing westward lay.  
 Night saw yon skies with ail their stars grow bright,  
 Our northern heaven so far beneath had gone,  
 It d'd not show above the ocean's height.  
 Five times were quenched, as oft rekindled, shone  
 The beams that from the lower moon-disk pour,  
 Since that adventure high was entered on,  
 When we descried a mountain all dimmed o'er,  
 And grey, through distance, that appeared to go  
 So high, as I had ne'er seen one before.  
 Whence we had joy, which soon was turned to woe,  
 For a tornado came from that high ground,  
 And struck our vessel's bows a heavy blow,  
 And thrice in whirling waters turned her round ;  
 On the fourth turn the force, since so willed He,  
 Made poop mount upward, and stem downward bound,  
 'Till above our heads had closed the sea."

"The germ, the spirit, and the sentiment of this poem are from the twenty-sixth canto of Dante's 'Inferno.' Tennyson has indeed done little but fill in the sketch of the great Florentine. As is usual with him in all cases where he borrows, the details and minuter portions of his work are his own; he has added grace, elaboration, and symmetry."

COLLINS.

"There is more about myself in 'Ulysses,' which was written under the sense of loss, and that all had gone by, but that still life must be fought to the end. It was more written with the feeling of his (Hallam's) loss upon me than many poems in 'In Memoriam.'"

TENNYSON to Mr. Knowles.

"The dominant interest here, more than in 'Enone' and 'The Lotos-Eaters,' is the human interest—the soul that cannot rest, whom the unknown always allures to action—the image of the exact opposite of the temper of mind of the lotos-eaters. . . . That poem was built out of his own character, and embodied a type with which he had the strongest sympathy. . . . That pursuit of the ideal perfection, of the undiscovered land."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"Antithetically and grandly opposed to the nerveless sentiment of 'The Lotus-Eaters' is the masculine spirit of the lines on 'Ulysses,' one of the healthiest as well as most masterly of all Tennyson's poems."

BAYNE.

"We need not quarrel with Tennyson for having bestowed those mariners on Ulysses in his old age. There were, indeed, none such. They all lay fathomed up in brine; no Homer, no Athene, had paid regard to them; Ulysses returned alone to his isle, the hero only being of account in the eyes of classic poet or Pagan goddess. Tennyson's Ulysses is, after all, an Englishman of the Nelson wars rather than a Greek, and his feeling for his old salts is a distinctly Christian sentiment. So, indeed, is his desire for effort, discovery, labour, to the end. It never would have occurred to Homer that Ulysses could want anything for the rest of his life but pork-chops and Penelope."

BAYNE.

"For virile grandeur and astonishing compact expression, there is no blank-verse poem, equally restricted as to length, that approaches the 'Ulysses': conception, imagery, and thought are royally imaginative."

STEDMAN.

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Idle, doing nothing useful; having no scope for his powers.  
still hearth, quiet home in comparison with the stirring  
life he has experienced.

barren crags. Ithaca was a rocky island, and Ulysses had  
seen many fertile countries and great cities.

match'd, mated; considered equal because of marriage.

mete and dole, measure and deal out carefully and  
sparingly. He feels irritated at the petty business.

Unequal, not equable, inadequate. Ulysses knows wiser  
laws, but they are not suitable for his rude people.

know not me, cannot comprehend me; cannot understand  
my aspirations.

the lees, the dregs.



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**scudding drifts**, masses of clouds driven rapidly before the wind.

**Hyades**, a Greek word meaning rainers. A cluster of seven stars in the head of Taurus. Their rising with the sun was thought to bring rain.

**a name**, famous, *i.e.*, his name is on everybody's tongue.

**ringing**, resounding with the clash of arms.

**I am a part . . . met.** This is a line imitative of one of Virgil's. The Virgilian meaning is: I have greatly influenced all events in which I have been concerned. Possibly that meaning lurks in Tennyson's line, but his verse seems to say: I have been greatly influenced by all I have experienced.

**Ye . . . experience . . . I move.** This metaphor is easily understood by any railway-traveller. The untravelled world gleams brightly and alluringly from the exit archway of the tunnel. The longer and darker the tunnel, the brighter gleams the untravelled world. Finite man cannot hope to explore the world in all its richness, but as he progresses under the arches of experience, the range of his vision becomes wider and wider.

**but every hour . . . things.** If he is not profitably employed, he is virtually dead, *i.e.*, is already in eternal silence. But every hour nobly spent is an hour saved from the silent grave; it is something more than saved, since that hour brings with it new experiences.

**discerning to fulfil**, knowing well how to do.

**Decent . . . tenderness**, becomingly careful not to neglect filial acts of love.

**Gloom**, look dark and gloomy.

**frollic**, joyous. Compare Browning

"Greet the unseen with a cheer!

Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be.

'Strive and thrive!' Cry 'Speed,—flight on, fare ever  
There as here.'"

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**baths . . . stars.** It was a belief that the stars sank into the ocean.

gulfs, yawning depths of water.

**Happy Isles**, a group of islands off the west coast of Africa. It is believed that these were the Canary Islands.

**Achilles**, a famous Greek hero, the slayer of Hector. His arms were given to Ulysses. Ulysses visited Achilles in Hades on the way from Troy to Ithaca.

**One equal . . . hearts**, heroes of the same firm, true temper. Compare the common saying, *true as steel*.

### Exercise.

1. What single quality does Tennyson exalt in Ulysses? What other quality goes with it in the English ideal?
2. What was the Greek ideal? Refer in illustration to the sayings of Herè, Pallas, and Aphrodite in "Cenone."
3. What were his duties and how did he excuse himself from them?
4. Compare with Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra":—  
 "Grow old along with me;  
 The best is yet to be,  
 The last of life for which the first was made.  
 Our times are in his hand  
 Who said 'A whole I planned,  
 Youth's at half; trust God; see all, nor be afraid!'"
5. What does Tennyson take from Dante in this poem? And what is original to Tennyson?
6. What does *manners* in line 11 mean?
7. Give construction of *myself* in line 15.
8. What had the situation of Troy to do with frequent winds?
9. Since experience is behind us, is it correct to represent it as an arch that stands before us?
10. What hour is chosen for the beginning of the voyage? Why such an hour?
11. What did Ulysses wish to know?
12. Did Ulysses love his son more, or less than he loved his mariners?

13. "The lights began to twinkle." What lights? Where is Ulysses as he sees them?

14. Note the apt use of words denoting colour.

15. Select epigrammatic lines.

16. What passages resemble the following:—

- (a) "The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees  
Is left this vault to brag of."

—*Shakespeare.*

- (b) "Perseverance, dear my lord,  
Keeps honour bright; to have done is to hang  
In monumental mockery."

—*Shakespeare.*

- (c) "Yesterday knows nothing of the best."—*Lowell.*

- (d) "The past is for us; and the sole terms on which it can  
become ours are its subordination to the present.

—*Emerson.*

- (e) "Reflect that life, like every other blessing,  
Derives its value from its use alone."

—*Johnson.*

## LIBERTY POEMS.

*Published in 1842.*

"He who loves not his country can love nothing."

JOHNSON.

These three liberty poems were written in 1833, the era of the Reform Bill, when all England was feverishly excited. It will be remembered that Tennyson left Cambridge in 1831; that Hallam died in 1833; and that Tennyson did not publish these poems till 1842.

Before Tennyson left Cambridge, he heard from his fellow-students many views on the political questions of the day. Of one college friend, James Spedding, Tennyson said, "He was the Pope among us young men - the wisest man I know." Spedding delivered a stirring political speech at the Cambridge Union. His enthusiasm was infectious. Tennyson tried to express in verse, sentiments similar to those of his revered friend Spedding. As the result, the world received these three poems.

"Some of the critics state that before these poems appeared no modern poet had undertaken the hard task of setting forth with poetic fire and glow the golden mean of politics. Tennyson's view was that a poet ought to love his own country, but that he should found his political poems on what was noble and great in the history of all countries, and that his utterances should be outspoken, yet statesmanlike, without any colour of partizanship."

HALLAM TENNYSON.

"I told Wordsworth that a young poet had lately risen up. Wordsworth answered that he feared from the little he had heard that if Crabbe was the driest of poets, the young aspirant must have the opposite fault. I replied that he should judge for himself, and without leave given, recited to him two poems by Tennyson, viz: 'You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,' and 'Of old sat Freedom on the heights.' Wordsworth listened with a gradually deepening attention. After a pause he

answered, 'I must acknowledge that these two poems are very solid and noble in thought. Their diction also seems singularly stately.'"

AUBREY DE VERE.

A young Englishman, proud of the political constitution of his country, addresses one who wonders why a man prefers foggy England to the salubrious climate of the south of Europe. Tennyson replies to the inquiry and offsets the many venomous attacks made on England's political and social condition by such poets as Shelley and Byron.

"YOU ASK ME, WHY, THO' ILL AT EASE."

"Better to dwell in Freedom's hall,  
With a cold damp floor and a mouldering wall,  
Than bow the head and bend the knee  
In the proudest palace of slavery."

MOORE.

### Page 32.

subsist, keep up an existence.

falter, move weakly, stumblingly. A gloomy climate makes one's spirits dull.

purple seas, such royal climates as southern Europe enjoys.

sober-suited. The English are not demonstrative. Their freedom is real, though not showy.

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single thought is civil crime, the thought of an individual is a crime against the state.

### Exercise.

1. "Tho' ill at ease." What caused his discomfort.
2. "Freemen till." What does this signify as to the extent of freedom in England?
3. "Where girt . . . will." Illustrate from contemporary history. Was it always so in England?

4. "Settled government." How so, when the country is governed by party?
5. "Just and old renown." How old? Why are the laws in a limited monarchy likely to be more justly administered than in a republic?
6. "Broadens down." To what is Tennyson comparing liberty?
7. "Precedent." Give an historical instance to show what precedent means.
8. "But by degrees. . . . spread." Explain the British method of making a law in so far as suggested by these words.
9. After Tennyson, enumerate the ninefold advantages of living in England. Does Tennyson state those advantages in any special order?
10. "Every channel of the state." To what is the state here compared?
11. "Waft . . . wild wind!" Is "waft" too gentle for "wild wind"?
12. "Purple seas," "palms," "temples." Describe the scene these words suggest.
13. Write the last three stanzas in logical prose order, to show that they form the conclusion of the poem.
14. Which predominates in this poem, fact or fancy?
15. Select all expressions that are especially poetic.
16. "Sober-suited Freedom," "Freedom slowly broadens down," "individual freedom."
  - (a) Why is not freedom in the third excerpt capitalized?
  - (b) Does the word freedom convey the same picture in the three extracts?
  - (c) Should it do so in the same short poem?
17. Is the "In Memoriam" stanza suitable for the thought of this poem?

**"OF OLD SAT FREEDOM ON THE HEIGHTS."**

"The greatest glory of a free-born people  
Is to transmit that freedom to their children."

HAVARD.



ATHENA PARTHENOS.

Tennyson's thought seems to be that Freedom as it was enjoyed in England in 1833 was really freedom; and that, in the ancient history of Greece and Rome, what is called freedom is far from being freedom as an Englishman understands it, since the masses were not free,

The poem is a biography of freedom, its conception and progress in ancient and modern times.

**Page 33.**

Of old sat .. heights. Athene among the Greeks, and Minerva among the Romans, typified the ancient conception of Freedom. It is a noble conception; but, in comparison with modern democratic ideas of liberty, that conception

was of little practical value to the people. Liberty was a goddess. Her associates were gods and goddesses, not mankind. Consequently, she dwelt on the heights, Olympus-like. Jove's thunderbolts were below her; i.e., she was not on earth with mankind.

The poet may have had in mind the masterpiece of the great Greek sculptor, Phidias. It was a statue of Athene, made in gold and ivory. It was placed high on the acropolis, overlooking the city, and was the admiration of mariners as they approached or left the city. The head of Athene is often found on Athenian coins, just as the image of Britannia, described in the fourth verse, was often put on old English coins.

**Self-gather'd....mind**, self-satisfied, contented and patient,  
because she foresaw the good she would do mankind.

**But fragments....wind.** Men were beginning to learn her  
lessons and obey her high commands.

**Grave mother....crown.** This answers to the image of  
Britannia, as seen on coins.

**her isle-altar, Britain.**

**God-like.** Neptune, the God of the Sea, held the trident.



**Page 34.**

**Her open eyes....tears.** Cf. Tennyson's lines, written in  
1884, on Freedom :—

“ For thou—when Athens reign'd and Rome,  
Thy glorious eyes were dimm'd with pain—  
To mark in many a freeman's home  
The slave, the scourge, the chain ;

Howe'er blind force and brainless will  
May jar thy golden dream

Of knowledge fusing class with class,  
Of civic hate no more to be,  
Of love to leaven all the mass  
Till every soul be free.”

---

**Exercise.**

1. Why were the torrents of air and ocean especially delightful to the goddess ?
2. Why not reveal her face all at once ?
3. How does the stanzaic form differ from the “In Memoriam” stanza ?



**"LOVE THOU THY LAND."**

"He who maintains his country's laws  
Alone is great ; or he who dies in the good cause."

HUNT.

The first nine stanzas of this poem tell the works of a patriot. His intelligent love reaches its consummation in the laws he makes to govern his country. The next four stanzas are episodic. Their purpose is to present an analogy of gradual, natural growth, the prototype of all growth. The next five stanzas refer especially to the political conditions of England in 1832, when was effected the most remarkable peaceful revolution in history. The last six stanzas make an appeal for peaceful measures wherever possible.

"It is with almost a scientific analysis of the whole question of the future society, and with arguments drawn from geology, that he predicts the enormous time in which the betterment or the perfection of society will be wrought. He had really little or no faith in man as man, but he had faith in man as conducted, in reasonable obedience, to the final restitution by an entity which he called law."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

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with love far-brought, love begotten of a knowledge of the history of the country ; so that the love is rational, not wholly intuitive or emotional. A reverence for the past is a marked feature of Tennyson's patriotism.

used within the Present. Cf. :—

"Act—act in the living Present !  
Heart within, and God o'erhead !"

but transfused . . . thought. The patriot works with the thought fully before him that future generations will enjoy his labours.

sophister, specious, but fallacious reasoner.

To weakness, to weak men.

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for nature also....form. Heat, cold, moisture, and dryness were supposed to be the four elements of nature from which all things were made.

the basis of the soul. Human nature remains essentially the same.

So let the change, etc. Let the old law and the new law be so fashioned that the one will fit into the other. Such a law would respect the rights and privileges of all classes and secure their sympathy. It would be as a ball and socket joint in the organism or mechanism of the state.

A saying . . . . act. Such legislation is more easily effected in theory than in practice

Ev'n now we hear . . . . Life. It is impossible at present to see clearly the outcome of the political, social, and economic movements that are working about us.

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Not yet the wise of heart, etc. Notwithstanding the blunders and failures that may mark the progress of the world, true men will still quit themselves like men, and hope and work for better things.

Exercise.

1. "True love turn'd round on fixed poles." Explain the metaphor.
2. "Sordid ends." Is title, place, pension, or self the most sordid?
3. "For English natures . . . . souls." Which of these is it easiest to love?
4. "Pamper not a hasty time." What time does the poet mean? Why does he call it *hasty*?
5. "Crude imaginings." With what should the herd be fed?
6. "The herd." What kind of cattle is suggested? What feeling toward the people does the use of this term indicate?

7. "Feeble wings." Do they not soar? Would the herd have wings?
8. "Lime." Does *lime* refer to herd, to hearts, or to wings? Is the metaphor satisfactory?
9. "Hide the ray." What ray?
10. "Herald, Reverence." Must reverence precede knowledge?
11. "To whatever sky." Does the rime force the word *sky*?
12. "Main-currents." Should a statesman direct the current or let it direct him? How do the next following lines guard and qualify the meaning?
13. Should one be more severe with his own prejudices than with those of others?
14. "Weakness of thy peers." How can one's peers be weak?
15. Does "watch-words" include "ancient saw" and "modern term"?
16. "That from Discussion's lip." What is the antecedent of *that*?
17. "Meet is it . . . . ease." Find this thought in "Morte d'Arthur."
18. "For all the past . . . . Fact." Give an instance of a revolution from which good government resulted.
19. "Painful school." What school?
20. "Regard gradation." How many times in this poem does Tennyson urge moderation?
21. "Wiser than our sires." How can men prove that?
22. "Nature's evil star." Give the origin of the expression.
23. "In manhood, as in youth." In 1833, was the world in manhood or in youth?
24. "To follow flying steps of Truth."
  - (a) Is Truth the general of the army?
  - (b) Where would the armies meet in shock?
25. "Principles are rain'd in blood." Give instances where principles grew strong with the blood of those who died for them.

26. "Thro' shame and guilt." What is supposed to occasion the shame and guilt?
27. Which is the less attractive sister, *Raw Haste* or *Delay*?
28. Write out all the verbs to which "*wise of heart*" is subject.
29. Find in this poem sentiments similar to :
  - (a) "Time brings its own reward."
  - (b) "Speak gently! It is better far to rule by love than fear."
  - (c) "Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change."
30. To whom is the poem addressed?
31. Suggest a title for each of the liberty poems.

## ST. AGNES' EVE.

*Published in 1837.*

"An angel might have stoop'd to see,  
And bless'd her for her purity."

MACKAY.

"No man can hinder our private addresses to God: every man can build a chapel in his breast, himself the priest, his heart the sacrifice, and the earth he treads on the altar."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Saint Agnes was born at Rome, of Christian parents, toward the close of the third century. She dedicated herself to God in her childhood. The illustrious rank of her family, and the surpassing beauty of the young lady, caused her to be sought for in marriage when she was only thirteen years old. Her suitor was a pagan, Procopius, son of the governor of Rome. Saint Agnes refused to marry him, and, after terrible persecution, suffered martyrdom.

The 21st of January is sacred to St. Agnes. It is not known how popular superstitions clustered around the vigil of that feast. However, in England, the eve of St. Agnes' Day was like Hallowe'en in Scotland. By the girls, all magic arts were practised to secure a sight of a future husband. Keats' poem, "The Eve of St. Agnes," popularized the worldly romance of Madeline and Porphyro.

Keats died in 1817. Tennyson's poem was published in 1837. The spiritual beauty and fervour of Tennyson contrasts with the sensuous charm of Keats. Madeline becomes a saintly nun who wins through prayer and faith a vision of the Heavenly Bridegroom. It is not necessary in this work-day world to wait till the magic hour of a special midnight to catch a glimpse of His benign face. Whenever the heart is pure, the Vision appears.

"Purest and highest of all the lyrical pieces are 'St. Agnes' and 'Sir Galahad,' full of white light, and each a stainless idealization of its theme."

STEDMAN.

"Tennyson's nun is a pure and beautiful enthusiast who has died away from all her human emotions, and has become the bride for whom a Heavenly Bridegroom is waiting. . . . Every image is in such delicate harmony with the pure young worshipper that it seems to have been transfigured by her purity, and in the last four lines the very sentences faint with the breathless culmination of her rapture."

LUCK:

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argent round, the full moon in its silver light.

mine earthly house. Cf. II. Cor. v. 1: "For we know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Break up, break open.

the shining sea. Cf. Rev. xv., 2: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire."

### Exercise.

1. "The snows." Why is *snows* used instead of *snow*?
2. "First snowdrop of the year." Is it probable that the nun would have it then?
3. "Deepens on and up." Show the force of *on*.
4. Examine the syntax of the last four lines of the poem. Why is the construction broken?
5. Is the poem wholly a monologue?
6. Show that each time the nun makes a prayer, something that she observes prompts the prayer.
7. Select all the words that suggest white light. Is there any other colour in the poem?
8. What is meant by saying that the nun is the feminine Galahad?

## SIR GALAHAD.

*Published in 1842.*

"So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,  
That when a soul is found sincerely so,  
A thousand livy'd angels lucky her,  
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt."

MILTON.

Sir Galahad was the youngest knight ever made by King Arthur, and was the purest in heart of all the Knights of the Round Table. When Arthur dubbed Galahad knight, Arthur said, "God made thee good as thou art beautiful." His armour was white. He was the only knight that could sit in the siege perilous.

Galahad was faithfully performing his knightly duties at Arthur's court when suddenly he saw the Holy Grail and heard a voice cry, "O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me." Arthur was told of Galahad's vision and call, and said, "Ah, Galahad, Galahad, for such as thou art is the vision." After a long and faithful search Galahad saw the Holy Grail.

"According to the mythology of the Romancers, the San Grael, or Holy Grail, was the cup out of which Jesus partook of the Last Supper with His disciples. It was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration, for many years, in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed; but one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favourite enterprise of the knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. . . . Tennyson has made Sir Galahad the subject of one of the most exquisite of his poems."

LOWELL.

"Yes, it is true; there are moments when the flesh is nothing to me, when I feel and know the flesh to be the vision, God and the Spiritual the only real and true. Depend upon it, the Spiritual is the real: it belongs to one, more than the hand

or the foot. You may tell me that my hand and my foot are only imaginary symbols of my existence, I could believe you; but you never, never can convince me that the *I* is not an eternal Reality, and that the Spiritual is not the only true and real part of me."

TENNYSON to Hallam Tennyson.

"Sir Galahad is a noble picture of a religious knight. He is almost as much a mystic as a soldier; both a monk and a warrior of the ideal type. He foregoes the world as much as if he lived within the monastery walls, and esteems his sword as sacred to the service of God as if it were a cross. His rapture is altogether that of the mystic. He is almost a St. Agnes, exchanging only the rapture of passivity for the transport of exultant effort. He is just the embodiment of the noblest and the strongest tendencies of the chivalric age."

TAINSH.

"Sir Galahad must be recited by a clarion voice, ere one can fully appreciate the sounding melody, the knightly heroic ring. The poet has never chanted a more ennobling strain."

STEDMAN.

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**carves, cuts through.**

**casques, helmets.**

**on the steel, the armour of the foe.**

**lists, enclosed tournament ground.**

**crypt and shrine.** The crypt was an underground vault in which the pious dead were interred. It was sometimes used as a chapel. The shrine was a chest, often richly decorated, containing sacred relics. It was commonly placed on the altar.

**virgin heart, pure heart.** Cf. Maiden knight, in the sixth stanza.

**When down the stormy crescent goes,** when the crescent moon sinks in storm clouds.

**stalls, seats in chancels for the clergy.**

**silver vessels,** which contained the consecrated bread and wine for the Eucharist.

**shrill bell rings,** at the elevation of the Host.



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beats her mortal bars. He longs to follow the blessed vision, but he is kept back by the body as a bird in a cage.  
 the leads, lead-covered roofs.  
 blessed forms, angels.  
 lilies. The lily is the emblem of chastity.

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hostel, inn, hotel.  
 hall, castle.  
 grange, farmhouse.

**Exercise.**

1. What are the points of resemblance and the points of contrast between *Sir Galahad* and *St. Agnes' Eve*?
2. "Shattering trumpet" What is the meaning of *shattering* here?
3. "Tide of combat." Develop the figure.
4. "Crypt and shrine." Distinguish.
5. "More bounteous." What are compared?
6. "Between dark stems . . . . glows." What produces the light in the forest?
7. "Noise of hymns." Is *noise* appropriate?
8. "I hear a voice . . . . between."
  - (a) Whose voice is it?
  - (b) Why are the doors open wide?
  - (c) What details show that a ceremony was taking place?
  - (d) Between what?
9. "Sleeping wings." What does *sleeping* mean?
10. What does the Grail resemble as it floats before Galahad?
11. "Streets dumb with snow"; "tempest crackles on the leads." Is this the same storm?
12. Find a reference to the belief that the cock crows from midnight till dawn on the Saviour's Birthday.
13. "Pure spaces"; "pure lilies." Does *pure* mean the same in these passages? Tell the syntax of spaces and lilies.
14. Why does the angel etherealize Galahad's armour?
15. Distinguish a park from a pale.
16. Select ten separate lines whose melody is especially excellent.

**BREAK, BREAK, BREAK.**

*Published in 1842.*

"Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene  
Resumes them, to prepare us for the next."

Yot so.

Arthur Hallam's birthday was Feb. 1, 1811. He was the son of the famous historian. Hallam and Tennyson became friends at Cambridge. There, Hallam looked up to Tennyson "as to a great poet and an elder brother." Tennyson thought Hallam was "as near perfection as mortal man could be." Tennyson said: "Hallam could take in the most abstruse ideas with the utmost rapidity and insight, and had a marvellous power of work and thought, and a wide range of knowledge."

In 1829, Hallam was affianced to Miss Emily Tennyson, Alfred's sister. In 1832, Tennyson and Hallam went for a tour on the Rhine. In August, 1833, Hallam went with his father to Vienna. The last letter from Hallam to Tennyson is dated Vienna, Sept 6, 1833, and begins, "The gallery is grand, and I longed for you." On the 15th of September, Mr. Hallam returned from a walk to find Arthur asleep in death. A blood vessel in the brain had suddenly burst. On Oct. 1st, Tennyson heard the sad news. On Dec. 30th, the body of Hallam reached England. On Jan. 3rd, Hallam was buried in the lonely little church of St. Andrew, Clevedon, Somersetshire.

Hallam Tennyson said: "From the graveyard you can hear the music of the tide as it rushes against the low cliffs not a hundred yards away." But Tennyson did not write his sweetly sad lyric while he actually listened to the mournful waves breaking on the "cold grey stones." Tennyson said he thought out the poem at five o'clock in the morning as he was strolling down a Lincolnshire lane. He was feeling the depression of bereavement, and, entirely oblivious of his surroundings, he imagined he was overlooking the Bristol Channel at Clevedon churchyard.

Everybody who knew Arthur Hallam loved him. Dean Alford said: "Hallam was a man of wonderful mind and knowledge on all subjects, hardly credible at his age. I long

ago set him down for the most wonderful person I knew. He was of the most tender, affectionate disposition." Tennyson made Hallam and himself immortal by this widely-popular lyric and by the best elegy ever written, the "In Memoriam."

Each stanza of "Break, Break, Break" is a quatrain, but each quatrain has a different arrangement of the iambs and the anapaests, and of the trimetres and tetrametres. The dirge-like sea-tones are echoed in the monosyllabic trimetre, | Break, | break, | break, | which should be read with long pauses between the words, as if the reader were listening for the sound of another breaking wave. The presence of many anapaests lightens the iambic rhythm, and suggests a cheerfulness that ends in resignation. The second stanza has nine anapaests—a fitting expression of the bright spirits of innocent children at play. The exquisite music of the whole poem plays round the heart of the reader.

"Nor has Tennyson ever composed, in his minor key, a more enduring and suggestive little song than "Break, Break, Break!"

STEDMAN.

"It is somewhat strange, but illustrative . . . . of the dominance of the man in Tennyson that the poem of fullest regret for love drowned in death is written in memory of a *man*. Every one knows it; it is a piece of perfect work, fully felt, and fully finished, simple and profound—and with what fine art Nature is inwoven with its passion!"

STOFFORD BROOKE.

But O for the touch . . . . hand . . . . still!

"This overwhelming sorrow, as my father told me, for a while blotted out all joy from his life, and made him long for death, in spite of his feeling that he was in some measure a help and comfort to his sister."

HALLAM TENNYSON.

**Exercise.**

1. Show that there is a method in the order of the different objects Tennyson notices as he stands on the sea-cliff.
2. At what hour does it seem that the poet views the scene?
3. "I would . . . in me." What was the nature of those thoughts?
4. The grey stones, the stately ships, the water dashing on the crags, call forth an utterance from Tennyson; but the children at play provoke no words: how is this?
5. Will never come back to me." Is this the most poignant grief?

## ODE ON THE DEATH OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

*Published in 1852.*

"In all epochs of the world's history, we shall find the Great Man to have been the indispensable saviour of his epoch; the lightning, without which the fuel never would have burnt."

CARLYLE.

On the evening of November 14, 1852, the Duke of Wellington fell asleep in death at Walmer Castle, his official castle as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. His body lay in state for three days in Chelsea Hospital, which is three miles from St. Paul's Cathedral. His funeral took place on Nov. 18th. It was a very pompous state funeral. It was attended by the Prince Consort and all the chief officers of state. All London watched reverently the long procession of mourners. All hearts throbbed in unison with the notes of the "Dead March in Saul" as band after band played that most solemn of marches.

Tennyson's Ode was published on the morning of the funeral—his first public offering as poet laureate. Tennyson watched the funeral procession, and remarked: "I was struck with the look of sober manhood in the British soldier."

Hallam Tennyson says: "It is interesting to note that, while the Ode was being abused in all directions by the Press, my father wrote thus to his publishers: 'If you lose by the Ode, I shall not consent to accept the whole sum of £200, which you offered me. I consider it quite a sufficient loss if you do not gain by it.'

"Henry Taylor wrote: 'I have read your Ode and I believe that many thousands at present, and that many hundreds of thousands in future times, will feel about it as I do, or with a yet stronger and deeper feeling; and I am sure that every one will feel about it according to his capacity of feeling what is great and true. It has a greatness worthy of its theme and an absolute simplicity and truth, with all the poetic passion of your nature moving beneath.'

"And here is my father's reply: 'Thanks, thanks! . . . . In the all but universal depreciation of my Ode by the Press,

the prompt and hearty appreciation of it by a man as true as the Duke himself is doubly grateful."

Tennyson polished his first production very carefully. It is probable that he was hurried with its composition.

"'I will read you something old.' He read the 'Ode on the Duke of Wellington.' He dwelt long on the final words, letting them ring, so to speak, especially *toll'd, Boom*. At the end he said, 'It is a great roll of words, the music of words. For a hundred people who can sing a song, there are not ten who can read a poem. People do not understand the music of words.'"

HALLAM TENNYSON.

"In the 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington' he has soared to lyric heights to which, perhaps, even Pindar never attained. The tolling of the bell, the solemn and slow funeral march, the quick rush of battle, and the choral chant of the cathedral, all succeed one another, and the verse sinks and swells, rises and falls to every alternation with equal power."

SHEPHERD.

"This is one of his finest poems. It was fitting that the foremost man in England, who had worn his honours with a quiet simplicity for so many years in the 'fierce light' which shines on a world-wide fame, and in whom the light never found anything mean or fearful, should, after his death, receive this great and impassioned tribute. . . . This is as great a poem as the character was which it celebrated. The metrical movement rushes on where it ought to rush, delays where it ought to delay. Were the poem set by Handel, its rhythmical movements could scarcely be more fit, from point to point, to the things spoken of, more full of stately, happy changes. Moreover, the conduct of the piece is excellent. It swells upwards in fuller harmony and growing thought till it reaches its climax in VI. about Nelson and Wellington. Then it slowly passes downwards in solemn strains like a storm dying in the sky, and at the end closes in soft spiritual passages of ethereal sound, like the lovely clouds about the

setting sun when the peace of evening has fallen on a tempestuous day. Its conduct is then the conduct of one form of the true lyric, that whose climax is in the midst, and not at the close."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"The 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington' was the first, and remains the most ambitious, of his patriotic lyrics. This tribute to the 'last great Englishman' may fairly be pronounced equal to the occasion; a respectable performance for Tennyson, a strong one for another poet. None but a great artist could have written it, yet it scarcely is a great poem, and certainly, though Tennyson's most important ode, is not comparable with his predecessor's lofty discourse upon the 'Intimations of Immortality.' Several passages have become folkwords, such as 'O good grey head which all men knew!' and

"This is England's greatest son—  
He that gain'd a hundred fights,  
Nor ever lost an English gun!"

But the ode, upon the whole, is laboured, built up of high-sounding lines and refrains, after the manner of Dryden, in which rhetoric often is substituted for imagination and richness of thought."

STEDMAN.

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I.

**Warriors....pall.** Military officers were his pall-bearers.

II.

**central.** St. Paul's Cathedral is in the centre of London.

III.

**low, laid low in death.**

IV.

**state-oracle.** Wellington was a Cabinet Minister in 1818. He was Prime Minister from 1828 till 1830.

**blood, temperament.**

**Whole in himself,** complete in himself; not depending on others.

**a common good,** he helped everybody.

**pretence, self-conceit or self-assertion.**

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**O good grey head.** His wealth of coal-black hair grew silvery white, and there was not the slightest trace of baldness.

**World-victor's Victor,** the conqueror of Napoleon Bonaparte.

V.

**All....done,** his life is ended.

**Let the bell be toll'd.** The great bell of St. Paul's is tolled at the death of members of the royal family, the bishop, the dean, and the lord mayor. Its tolling at Wellington's funeral was a great honour.

**cross of gold.** A large gilded cross surmounts the dome of St. Paul's.

**towering car.** Wellington's funeral car was made from guns he captured. It was drawn by six noble steeds. The car is now in St. Paul's.

**blazon'd deeds.** The names of Wellington's battles are inscribed on the car in gold letters.

**Dark....fold.** The pall was of black velvet.

**volleying cannon,** minute guns fired during the funeral.

**in many a clime.** In India, Spain, Portugal, France, Belgium.

**Guarding....shame.** In 1810, Wellington saved Portugal from the French; in 1813, he restored Ferdinand VII. to Spain.

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**in dispraise.** In 1830, Wellington opposed parliamentary reform. He became extremely unpopular. He was hooted and insulted.

**well-attemper'd frame,** well proportioned, strong character.

VI.

**breaking....rest.** Nelson is the supposed questioner. Wellington and Nelson rest side by side in the crypt under the dome of St. Paul's.

**nor ever lost an English gun.** Wellington never lost a battle or a gun. He captured 3,000 guns.



**myriads of Assaye.** Assaye is a small town in Hindostan, where Wellington as General Wellesley began his victorious career. He defeated the Mahrattan army of 50,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, and 128 guns, with one-tenth the number of soldiers and 17 guns

**treble works,** three lines of Torres Vedras. The outer line was twenty-nine miles long. The lines were protected by many forts and redoubts, and by about four hundred guns. Wellington retreated to the lines in 1810 and was followed by Massena, the French general, who sought vainly for a vulnerable point. In 1811, Massena retired, and Wellington pursued him and defeated him in two battles at Fuentes de Onoro.

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**wasted vines.** The vineyards of Spain were laid waste by the French soldiers.

**Till o'er the hills .... foes.** In 1813, Wellington won Vittoria. He then crossed the Pyrenees and drove the French army before him to Bayonne. The French Republicans chose the eagle for ensign.

**Again their ravening .... kings.** Under Napoleon after his return from the Elbe.

**wheel'd.** Eagles fly in circles.

**that loud sabbath.** Waterloo was fought Sunday, June 18, 1815.

**Last, the Prussian trumpet blew.** At 7 p. m. the Prussians came to Wellington's aid.

**Heaven flash'd .... ray.** The setting sun broke through the rain-clouds.

**long-enduring hearts.** All day long, the British army fought on the defensive.

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##### VII.

**His Saxon in blown seas.** This is now changed to "*His Briton*," etc. The change reduces the number of sibilants and it removes the possibility of offence to any supersensitive Celt.

**keep our noble England whole,** not rent by factions and conspiracies.

**one true seed**, mutual esteem between a free people and a constitutional ruler.

**temperate kings**, limited monarchs.

**But wink . . . overtrust.** In 1852, the House of Commons rejected the bill to organize the militia. Tennyson was annoyed at that rejection because he feared Napoleon III. He wrote "Britons, Guard your Own," "Hands All Round," and "The Third of February, 1852," to stir up the people.

**He bade . . . coasts.** In 1818, Wellington advocated the complete fortification of the Channel Islands, Seaford, Portsmouth, and Plymouth; the addition of 20,000 men to the regular army, and the raising of 150,000 militia to guard against invasion. He pleaded in vain.

**rugged maxims . . . life.** A good maxim of Wellington's was, "A great country ought never to make little wars."

**never spoke against a foe.** He was remarkably generous in speaking of his opponents. His only decisive military repulse was at the siege of Burgos, 1812. When he acknowledged himself repulsed, he publicly congratulated General Dubreton.

"I wish VII. were excluded from the poem. But that would be to wish away one of Tennyson's most characteristic utterances as a patriot. Nevertheless, it is too exclusively English, too controversial, too much an attack on France, too contemptuous of the people whom he sees only as the mob; too fond of the force of great men to the exclusion of the force of the collective movements of the nation. A great artist should not overstep so much the limits of temperance; or, to put this otherwise, he should not lose his sympathy with the whole of humanity in his sympathy with his own country."

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STOFFORD BROOKE.

VIII.

**the brave of other lands.** Austria was the only European country not represented at the funeral.

**Lavish Honour . . . stars.** The people, the parliaments, and the Crown gave him every honour possible. He was voted £500,000 to support his peerage. *Stars* means badges of distinction.

**affluent Fortune....horn.** Lady Fortune carries a cornucopia full of favours for her favourites.

**saved from shame,** the shame of being captured by Napoleon.

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#### IX.

**little children clung.** Wellington loved children. He was especially fond of his grandchildren.

**More than is....degree.** Higher thoughts and feelings than those which have to do with battles and victories: reverence, prayer.

**memories all too free.** *Free means bold, unrestrained.*

**Ashes....dust.** From the burial service of the Church of England.

### Exercise.

#### I.

1. "Sorrow darkens hamlet and hall."

(a) To what is sorrow compared?

(b) What do hamlet and hall denote?

#### II.

2. "Echo round his bones." Why bones?

#### III.

3. "Martial music blow." Is *blow* suitable for a band?

#### IV.

1. "Which stood four-square." Explain four-square applied to a tower and to a man's behaviour.

#### VI.

5. "For this is England's greatest son." Is Wellington greater than Nelson? Does Tennyson mean to say so?

6. "Silver-coasted isle." Does this refer to chalk cliffs or to the ocean?

7. "Eternal honour to his name." Is *eternal* extravagant?

#### VII.

8. "Guard the eye, the soul of Europe." In what sense is England the eye and the soul of Europe? Which is the greater name?

VIII.

9. "Voluptuous garden roses." Is *voluptuous* appropriate to the rose?

IX.

10. Find a passage whose meaning is like the meaning of —

"Somewhere, surely afar,  
In the sounding labour-house vast  
Of being, is practised that strength."

11. Select especially beautiful cadences.

12. Why such varied lengths of lines?

13. What is the method in the rimes?

14. Do you find the music or the thought the more attractive?

15. What impression would future generations have of Wellington, if Tennyson's ode were the only source of knowledge about the Iron Duke?

## THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

*Published in 1854.**"It is splendid; but it is not war."*

GENERAL BOSQUET.

The charge of the Light Cavalry Brigade was a very thrilling incident in the Battle of Balaclava, Oct. 25, 1854.

Lord Raglan, Commander-in-Chief, was so stationed that he had a full view of the Russian army. He thought that the Russians were preparing to retreat, and to carry off as trophies the English guns taken from the Turks. That disgrace Raglan determined to prevent. He intimated his determination to his quartermaster-general, Airey. Airey wrote thus to Lord Lucan, the leader of the Cavalry division:—

"Lord Raglan wishes the Cavalry to advance rapidly to the front, and try to prevent the enemy from carrying away the guns. Troop of horse artillery may accompany. French cavalry is on your left. Immediate.—AIREY."

Lord Raglan entrusted the order to Captain Nolan, the aide-de-camp of Airey. When Lucan received the order from Nolan he questioned its utility. Nolan said, "The Commander-in-Chief orders an immediate attack." Lucan knew that the guns meant were the English guns abandoned by the Turks. Yet he said to Nolan, "What guns?" Nolan pointed to the guns and said, "There, my lord, is your enemy; there are your guns."

Lucan selected Lord Cardigan and his Light Brigade of 673 men to take the guns. Cardigan, who was as brave as a lion, understood that he was to charge an army in position: to advance straight down a valley, which was one mile and a half in length, and which was protected on both flanks by Russian batteries; to make a frontal attack on a battery of 20 guns, each gun a twelve-pounder. When Nolan saw the direction that Cardigan was leading the men, Nolan, who knew well Lord Raglan's intention, tried to induce Cardigan to go cautiously by way of the redoubts; but Cardigan mistook Nolan's interference for audacity. However, a Russian shell killed Nolan, and Cardigan led his men down the valley of death.

The men cut down the gunners, and then found that behind the guns were six battalions of infantry and six battalions of cavalry. Through these they cut their way, and wheeled about to find themselves unsupported and surrounded. Nothing daunted, the men cut their way back, under the deadly fire of the Russian guns. One hundred and ninety-five men answered Cardigan's roll-call. He was wounded, but not disabled. The charge had lasted twenty minutes.

"On Dec. 2nd, my father wrote 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' in a few minutes, after reading the description in *The Times*, in which occurred the phrase 'some one had blundered,' and this was the origin of the metre of this poem.

" 'The Balaclava Charge,' with the following short preface, was forwarded to John Foster, to be printed on a fly-leaf for the Crimean soldiers:—

" 'Aug. 8, 1855.

" 'Having heard that the brave soldiers before Sebastopol, whom I am proud to call my countrymen, have a liking for my ballad on the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, I have ordered a thousand copies of it to be printed for them. No writing of mine can add to the glory they have acquired in the Crimea; but, if what I have heard be true, they will not be displeased to receive these copies from me, and to know that those who sit at home love and honour them.

" 'ALFRED TENNYSON.'"—LIFE I., 385.

"When writing confidentially to the Secretary of State, Lord Raglan declared that the result of the Light Cavalry charge was a 'heavy misfortune'—a misfortune he felt 'most deeply.' In conversation at headquarters, he not unfrequently expressed his painful sense of the disaster; and foreseeing the enthusiastic admiration which the feat would excite in England, he used sometimes to lament the perverseness with which he believed that his fellow-countrymen would turn from the brilliant and successful achievement of Scarlett's brigade to dwell and still dwell, upon the heroic, yet self-destructive, exploit of Lord Cardigan's squadrons; but the truth is that, apart from thoughts military, there was a deep human interest attaching to the devotion of the man and the men who, for the

sheer sake of duty, could go down that fatal North Valley as the English Light Cavalry did . . . . Despite all his anger and grief, despite the kind of protestation he judged it wholesome to utter for the discouragement of rash actions on the part of his officers, I still find him writing in private of the Light Cavalry charge that it 'was perhaps the finest thing ever attempted.' "

KINGLAKE.

### Exercise.

1. Why write "half a league" three times?
2. "All in the valley of Death." What does *all* mean?
3. Should not a soldier reason why he fights?
4. "Into the mouth of Hell." How so?
5. "Charging an army . . . . wonder'd." Is this literally correct?
6. Does Tennyson praise the men or the general?
7. How far is the fame of the charge due to history and how far to poetry?
8. Did Tennyson do well to celebrate a blunder? Give reasons.
9. We are told in the *Life* that the phrase "Some one had blundered" suggested the metre of this poem, but what is there in the metre itself to make it harmonize with the theme?
10. Note the changes of rime scheme and of stanza structure.



PHILIP'S FARM.

THE BROOK.

*Published in 1845.*

"Fond memory brings the light  
Of other days around me."  
MOORE.

Hallam Tennyson says that this poem was saved from the waste-paper basket into which the author had purposely thrown it. It is one of the few poems not changed by Tennyson after its first publication.

Many critics think that the brook referred to in the poem is the brook near Tennyson's birthplace, in Somersby, Lincolnshire. Others say that Tennyson emphatically denied the identification. Still others say Goethe's graceful lyric "Das Bächlein" (The Brooklet) gave Tennyson the inspiration for his poem. Whatever be its source, all are agreed that Tennyson's brook has the voice of a fairy songstress. To nearly every reader, young and old, it suggests a pretty brook whose song recalls sweet memories of happy summer hours.

"A pleasing feature of the volume of 1855 was an idyl, 'The Brook,' which is charmingly finished, and contains a swift and rippling inter-lyric delightful to every reader."

STEDMAN.

"The form of the poem is built on one of those pleasant motives taken from simple things in the far past, the charm



of which we do not feel at the time, but which, having been full of humanity, are enchanting to remembrance. We recall them and are young again; the years of monotonous struggle glide away, and we love what we did, and what we were. And if by chance we recollect these events amid the same landscape in which they took place, the illusion, and all the emotion that attends it, are deepened—for Nature has not changed, and we seem for the moment as unchanged as Nature. So Lawrence Aylmer felt, seeing the same flowers as of old, hearing the brook make the same music. Again Katie tells him her story; again he sees James wading through the meadow; again he hears old Philip chattering in his ear; again he bids his brother farewell. "Twenty years have vanished!"

STOFFORD BROOKE.

**Page 50.**

**scrip**, certificate indicating the possession of some kind of land or other property.

**Neillgherry**. (Nili, blue; giri, mountain.) The Neilgherry Hills are in British India. They are famous health resorts for invalids, and popular summer resorts for British residents.

**primrose fancies**, happy dreams of youth.

**coot**, wild aquatic bird.

**hern**, archaic form of heron.

**bicker**, scold noisily, brawl.

**thotps**, archaic for villages. Compare Ger. Dorf.

**Page 51.**

**fret**, wear or eat away.

**fallow**, field resting and untilled.

**fairly foreland**, dainty projection of land.

**grigs**, grasshoppers.

**grayling**, a fish having a large and richly-coloured dorsal fin.

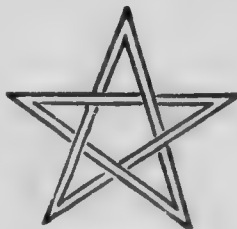
**lissome**, lithesome, pliant.

**Page 52.**

**neither one**. Change this reading to *nor of those*, etc.

**mealy-mouth'd**, using words as soft as meal; hence, hypocritically delicate of speech. The purpose is to conceal the plain truth.

**a wizard's pentagram**, a five-pointed



PENTAGRAM.

star, made with five straight lines. It was used of old as a symbol of perfection, and it was supposed to have magic powers.

**Page 53.**

meadow-sweet, a very pretty and delightfully fragrant English wild-flower of the genus *Spiraea*.

Approved, confirmed.

chase, unfenced, private game preserve.

**Page 54.**

covers, coverts, underbrush or thicket where the game is wont to hide.



netted sunbeam dance. The sunbeams, passing through the shallow water, appear on the brook-bed as a moving network of golden light.

**Page 55.**

The dome of Brunelleschi (broo-nel-lés-key). Duomo or dome means cathedral. The reference is to the cathedral of

Santa Maria, Florence. Brunelleschi was a famous Italian architect (1377-1444).

**converse seasons.** This is an old reading, which has now given place to *April-Autumn*, a much more poetic expression and a fine example of the improvements Tennyson was constantly making in his work. South of the equator April is an autumn month and, conversely, our autumn is the springtime of Australia.

**briony rings.** Briony or bryony is a wild climbing plant. Its tendrils are ring-shaped.

### Exercise.

1. Why was it too late for Edmund to visit Italy?
2. Why did Lawrence go to the East? Why does he mention himself first?
3. "One whom . . . despise."
  - (a) Why do the physically strong despise the physically weak?
  - (b) Is it true of the mentally or morally strong?
  - (c) Illustrate from literature or history.
4. What is meant by "Lucky rhymes?"
5. "Nor could he . . . dead thing." Are there yet people who believe it is unnatural for money to beget money?
6. "Yet himself . . . that is." Show how Tennyson is doing that for you in this poem.
7. "They flourish'd." Develop the comparison implied in *flourish*.
8. "When all the wood . . . perfect." In what month have you noticed this mist?
9. "Branding summers." How does *branding* differ here from *burning* or *scorching*?
10. Is "half a hundred" a better expression here than fifty? Why?
11. "It has more ivy." More than what?
12. "A maiden of our century, yet most meek." What does this imply as to the maidens of the nineteenth century?

13. "Divides threefold." Give from this poem other examples of the close observation of nature.
14. "Hoary eyebrow." What is the shape of the bridge?
15. "Waters marry." Give the common word for the thing described.
16. "Katie never ran." Is this literally true? What does it mean?
17. "Wizard's pentagram." Did Katie use this magic sign to wind up her charm, or is her action unconscious?
18. "Sweet-smelling lanes . . . wheat-suburb." To what are his shocks of wheat compared?
19. "His pigeons," etc. Note the poetic light thrown on the common actions of the pigeons, the puppies, and the deer.
20. "He gave them line." Explain the figure.
21. "A tansured head." What does this usually mean? What does it mean here?
22. Show that the song of the brook is naturally introduced whenever it occurs.
23. Where is the brook most musical?
24. What parts of the poem show most sympathy with humanity? What parts have most aesthetic charm?
25. Where in the poem does Tennyson speak harshly of excessive reading of novels? Is the remark relevant?
26. When is the garrulity of Philip natural?
27. "Would I . . . was it wrong?" What does the question indicate as to her character?
28. "Too happy . . . twenty years ago." Would little Katie have understood so quickly?
29. Which of these can you see most clearly—Philip, Jane, Katie, or little Katie?
30. Which is more effective, the first or the last part of the poem?—Lawrence Aymer's tansuring or the song of the brook?
31. Find sentiments in the poem similar to

(a)

"A local habitation and a name."  
A local habitation and a name.

Shakespeare.

(b) "When did friendship take  
A breed of barren metal of his friend?"  
— *Shakespeare*.

(c) "And now with treble soft  
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft."  
— *Keats*.

(d) "The cumbrous hind-weed, with its  
wreaths and bells."  
— *Wordsworth*.

32 "By the long wash of Australasian seas."

(a) Tennyson himself admired the rhythm of this line:  
What is its charm?

(b) Compare with the melody in Bryant's lines—

"The long wave rolling from the Southern Pole  
To break upon Japan."

SONGS FROM THE PRINCESS.

*Published in 1850.*

"The women sang  
Between the rougher voices of the men,  
Like linnets in the pauses of the wind."

*The Princess.*

One pleasant summer afternoon, a party of ladies and gentlemen met in the ruins of an old abbey. To while away the merry hours, there was proposed a game that Tennyson often played in his undergraduate days in Cambridge. One gentleman began a story about a Princess called Ida, who founded a college for women. Each of six other gentlemen contributed a part. Thus, the whole poem consisted of seven parts. The poem was published in 1817. A second edition followed in 1848. A third edition appeared in 1850, containing, for the first time, the famous interlude songs supposedly sung by the ladies between the stories of the gentlemen. Tennyson said he intended the songs "to express more clearly the meaning of the medley."

"As for the various characters in the poem, they give all possible views of woman's higher education; and as for the heroine herself, the Princess Ida, the poet who created her considered her as one of the noblest among his women. The stronger the man or woman, the more of the lion or lioness untamed, the greater the man or woman tamed . . . There have not been wanting those who have deemed the varied characters and imagery of the poem wasted on something of a fairy tale without the fairies. . . . It was no mere dramatic sentiment, but one of my father's strongest convictions of the true relation between man and woman, which impelled him to write :

'Let this proud watchword rest  
Of equal ; seeing either sex alone  
Is half itself, and in true marriage lies  
Nor equal, nor unequal : each fulfils  
Defect in each, and always thought in thought,

Purpose in purpose, will in will, they grow,  
The single, pure, and perfect animal,  
The two-cell'd heart beating, with one full stroke,  
Life."

HALLAM TENNYSON.

"The songs are all of a sweet and gentle humanity, of a fascinating and concentrated brevity, of common moods of human love made by the poet's sympathy and art to shine like the common stars we love so well. The falling out of wife and husband reconciled over the grave of their child, the mother singing to her babe of his father coming home from sea, the warrior in battle thinking of his home, the iron grief of the soldier's wife melted at last into tears by his child laid upon his knee, the maiden yielding at last to love she had kept at bay—these are the simple subjects of these songs."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"The six intercalary songs in 'The Princess' were first published in the third edition. These lyrics are even more widely known than the poem of which they now form so essential a part. They are among the most beautiful in the English language, whose linked sweetness they have borne to every civilized people under heaven. Although these lyrics have not undergone any revision since their first publication, their wonderful delicacy and perfection of structure and form bear witness that they are

'All perfect, finished to the finger-nail.'"

DR. RAND.

"But best of all are that immortal lyric,—'Tears, Idle Tears,' and the songs which divide the cantos. Tennyson tells us in a letter that these songs were not an after-thought; that he had designed them from the first, but doubted whether they were necessary, and did not overcome his laziness to insert them until the third edition in 1850. It may be that he came as near as this to leaving out the jewels which are to the poem what the stained glass windows are to the confused vastness of York Minster,—the light and glory of the structure."

VAN DYKE.

"The finest group of songs produced in our century."

STEDMAN.

TEARS, IDLE TEARS.

"They are too sweet to last."

SIR WM. JONES.

This is not an interlude lyric. It is found in the fourth part. Princess Ida and a number of ladies from her college were resting after a scientific ramble. Ida said:

"Let some one sing to us: lightlier move  
The minutes fledged with music:" and a maid,  
Of those beside her, smote her harp, and sang

this lyric,

"With such passion that the tear,  
She sang of, shook and fell, an erring pearl  
Lost in her bosom."

"Tennyson made the woman's question lovely. But he was so exalted by this abiding in love that he could not help at times in the poem breaking out into lyric songs, in which he might express a keener feeling of beauty, and reach a higher range of poetry than in the rest of the poem. . . . So he wrote in the midst of the poem a song of the sorrow of love past by forever, of the days that are no more. . . . 'Tears, Idle Tears,' represents more nearly than any of the songs of Tennyson, but chiefly in the last stanza, one phase, at least, of the passion of love between man and woman. It does not represent its enjoyment, but the wild regret of its continued existence in unfulfilment."

STOPFORD BROOKE.

"He said that 'The passion of the past, the abiding in the transient,' was expressed in 'Tears, Idle Tears,' which was written in the yellowing autumn-tide at Tintern Abbey, full for me of its bygone memories. Few know that it is a blank verse lyric."

HALLAM TENNYSON.



**Exercise.**

1. Are such tears idle?
2. "I know not what they mean." Is the regret vague? Is there no definite longing?
3. "Divine despair." What does *divine* mean here?
4. Why is autumn likely to cause sad thoughts?
5. Show the words that emphasize the freshness and the sadness in the second stanza.
6. Show the words that accentuate the strangeness in the third stanza.
7. Show that the passion is most intense in the fourth stanza.
8. Show how the poem depends on the words: fresh, sad, strange, dear, sweet, deep, wild.

AS THRO' THE LAND AT EVE WE WENT.

"Discord oft in music makes the sweeter lay."

SPENSER.

This is the form in which the poem first appeared—two five-line stanzas. Subsequently, four lines were inserted between those stanzas, and the fourteen lines were printed with ut division into stanzas. The following are the four lines:—

"And blessings on the falling out  
That all the more endears,  
When we fall out with those we love  
And kiss again with tears!"

Exercise.

1. What does *land* mean?
2. "We fell out, I know not why." Who was to blame, he or she?
3. Do fallings out endear?
4. What reconciled the parents?
5. Do the four lines added to the original version affect the unity of the poem favourably or otherwise? Give reasons.

## SWEET AND LOW.

"'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark  
Our coming, and look brighter when we come."

BYRON.

"Two versions of 'Sweet and Low' were made, and were sent to my mother to choose which should be published. She chose the published one in preference to that which follows, because it seemed to her more song-like.

(Unpublished Version.)

Bright is the moon on the deep,  
Bright are the cliffs in her beam,  
Sleep, my little one, sleep!  
Look! he smiles, and opens his hands,  
He sees his father in distant lands,  
And kisses him there in a dream,  
Sleep, sleep.

Father is over the deep,  
Father will come to thee soon,  
Sleep, my pretty one, sleep!  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west,  
Under the silver moon,  
Sleep, sleep!"

HALLAM TENNYSON.

## Exercise.

1. Who is the supposed singer of this lullaby?
2. What is the apparent time at which the song is sung?
3. Does the song bring sleep to the child, or is the child asleep during the whole song?
4. "All out of the west." What does *all* mean?
5. Describe the metre of this poem?
6. Show how the rhymes knit the verses into stanzas.

THE BUGLE SONG.

"Hark! how the gentle echo from her cell  
Talks through the cliffs, and murmuring o'er the stream,  
Repeats the accent 'we shall part no more.'"

AKENSIDE

"On the invitation of Aubrey de Vere, my father paid his second visit to Ireland; but he has left no record of his tour. At my request, Mr. de Vere has kindly written the following account:—

"In the year 1848, Alfred Tennyson had felt a craving to make a lonely sojourn at Bude: 'I hear,' he said, 'that there are larger waves there than on any other part of the British coast. . . . ' We sent him to our cousin, Maurice FitzGerald, Knight of Kerry, who lived at Valencia, where the cliffs and waves are seen at their best. . . . The sunset was one of extraordinary, but minatory beauty. It gave, I remember, a darksome glory to the vast and desolate expanse with all its creeks and inlets from the Shannon; lighted the green islands in the mouth of the Fergus, fired the ruined Castle of Shanid, a stronghold of the Desmond. The western clouds hung low, a mass of crimson and gold; while, from the ledge of a nearer one, down plunged a glittering flood empurpled like wine. The scene was a thoroughly Irish one; and gave a stormy welcome to the Sassenach Bard. . . . Afterwards Tennyson visited Killarney, but remained there only a few days; yet that visit bequeathed a memorial. The echoes of the bugle at Killarney on that loveliest of lakes inspired the bugle song. It is but due to Killarney that *both* the parents of that lyric should be remembered in connection with 'that fair child between them born'; and through that song, Killarney will be recalled to the memory of many who have seen, yet half forgotten it. When they read those stanzas, and yet more when they hear them fittingly sung, they will see again, as in a dream, the reach of its violet-coloured waters where they reflect the 'Purple Mountain,' the 'Elfhound' of its Black Valley, 'Croom-a-doof,' the silver river that winds and flashes through wood and rock, connecting the mystic 'Upper Lake,' and the beetling rock of the 'Eagle's Nest,' with the



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5.0

3.6

2.5

1.8

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0.11

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0.056



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two larger and sunnier, but not lovelier lakes. Before them again will rise Dinis Island, with its embowered coves and their golden sands, the mountain gardens of Glenna haunted by murmurs of the cascade, not distant, but shrouded by the primeval oak-woods. They will look again on that island, majestic at once and mournful, Inisfallen, its grey-stemmed and solemn groves, its undulating lawns, which embosom the ruins of that Abbey, the shelter from century to century of Ireland's annalists. They will muse again in the yew-roofed cloister of Muckross, and glide once more by its caverned and fantastic rocks, and promontories fringed by arbutus brakes, with their dark, yet shining leaves, their scarlet berries and their waxen flowers. Whatever is fairest in other lakes, they will see here combined, as if Nature had amused herself by publishing a volume of poetic selections from all her works. As the vision fades, their eyes will rest long on the far mountains that girdle all that beauty, mountains here and there dark with those yew-forests through which the wild deer of old escaped from the stag-hounds of MacCarthy more. It is marvellous that so many of the chief characteristics of Killarney should have found place in a poem so short."

HALLAM TENNYSON.

"The bugle song is the noblest, a clear, uplifted, softly-ringing song. It sings, in its short compass, of four worlds, of ancient chivalry, of wild nature, of romance where the horns of Elfland blow, and of the greater future of mankind. And in singing of the last, it touches the main subject of love, love not of person to person, but of each life to all the lives that follow it:

Our echoes roll from soul to soul,  
And grow forever and forever.

Yet it is the lover who tells this to his sweetheart, and the universal element is made delicate by its union with the personal love of these two happy creatures. It is well that the soul of man should enter into the close of the song; but the greatest poetical beauty has been reached in the second stanza, where by a magical employment of words the whole world of Elfland is created, and with it all the romantic tales echo in the ear."

STOPFORD BROOKE.





The splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long light shakes across the lakes  
And the wild ceremonial leaps in glory.

(Chorus)

O hark, O hear! how thin & clear  
And thinner, clearer farther going  
O sweet & far from cliff & scar

and thinner, clearer farther going  
O sweet & far from cliff & scar  
The horns of Elfland go <sup>on</sup> blowing  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying  
Blow, bugle; answer echoes dying, dying, dying

O love they die in you rich sky  
They faint on hill or field or river  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul  
And grow for ever & for ever.  
Blow bugle blow set the wild echoes flying  
And answer echoes answer dying dying dying

---

Home they brought her warrior dead:  
She nor swooned nor uttered cry:  
All her maidens whispering said,  
She must weep or she will die

Then they praised him soft & low  
Call'd him worthy to be loved,  
Truest friend & noblest foe;  
Yet she neither spoke nor moved

Stole a maiden from her place,  
Lightly to the warrior stole,  
Took the face cloth from the face:  
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,  
Set his child upon her knee -  
'Like summer tempest come her tears:  
Sweet my child, I live for thee.

---

When all among the thundering drums  
Thy soldier in the battle stands,

Thy face across his fancy comes

And gives the battle to his hands:

A moment while the trumpet-blow,

He sees his brood about! Thy knell -

The real - like fire he meets the foe,

Strikes him dead for them & thee.

True to torture!

---

Ask me no more: the moon may show the

The cloud may stop from heaven & <sup>clear</sup> take the sky;

With fold or fold, of mountain or of cape;

But O too fond, when have I answered thee?

Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give

I love not hollow cheer or faded eye:

Yet O my friend, I will not have thee die!

Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;

Ask me no more:

Ask me no more: Thy gate & mine are sealed:  
I strove against the stream but all in vain  
Let the great river take me to the main:  
No more dear love for at a touch I yield:  
Ask me no more.



As thro' the land at eve we went,  
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
We fell out: my wife and I?

And pluck'd the ripen'd ear,  
We fell out my wife and I,  
And kiss'd again with tears:  
And blessings on the falling-one!  
That all the more endear'd,  
When we fall out with those we love,  
And kiss again with tears!  
For when we came where Cest the child  
We look'd in other years,  
There above the little grass,  
We kiss'd again with tears.

II These are not written regularly but just as they  
turned up.

**Exercise.**

1. What causes the splendour, sunset or moonrise?
2. "Snowy." Is the reference to snow-caps or to age?
3. "Long light." What makes the rays seem long?
4. "Shakes." Does this refer to the ray or the motion of the water?
5. "Cliff and scar." What is the difference?
6. Who is supposed to be speaking the poem?
7. In which stanza are the vowels fullest in sound, and in which are they thinnest?
8. State simply the contrast between the material and the spiritual to which this poem leads up.

**THY VOICE IS HEARD THRO' ROLLING DRUMS.**

"The arms are fair,  
When the intent of bearing them is just."

SHAKESPEARE.

(An earlier version):

Lady, let the rolling drums  
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands;  
Now thy face across his fancy comes  
And gives the battle to his hands.

Lady, let the trumpet blow,  
Clasp thy little babes about thy knee:  
Now their warrior father meets the foe,  
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.

**Exercise.**

1. Who is the supposed reciter of this poem?
2. Is *brood* sufficiently dignified?
3. Whom does *thine* include?
4. Compare the version of the text with the earlier version.  
Which do you prefer? Give reasons for your preference.



HOME THEY BROUGHT HER WARRIOR DEAD.

"Life without love's a load, and time stands still;  
Only when we love, we live."

CONGREVE.

**Exercise.**

1. Who sings this song?
2. To whom does *they* refer?
3. What indicates the depth of the wife's grief when she first sees the body of her husband?
4. Why is the nurse represented as ninety years old?
5. Show that the thought of the poem is in climactic order.
6. Is the rhythm iambic or trochaic?

## ASK ME NO MORE.

"For Love shall still be lord of all!"

SCOTT.

---

**Exercise.**

1. Who is the professed singer of the song?
2. To whom is it sung?
3. Why does the singer not care to be questioned particularly about the course taken?
4. How does the first stanza explain that love is natural?
5. What excuse does the second stanza give for loving?
6. Does the third stanza imply that the freedom of loving was not granted the speaker? Could that feeling not have been resisted?
7. "Of the 125 words of this song, only 7 have more than one syllable, and these only two."
  - (a) What is the rhythmical effect?
  - (b) Is it a natural combination of words?
  - (c) Does the stateliness of tone reflect the mood of the singer?
8. Sketch the previous life of the singer as you imagine it from the words of the song.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES.

**NOTE.**—These questions and exercises are not all for junior students. They are, in part, hints and helps for teachers and other readers of some experience and literary culture. Judgment should be used, therefore, in selecting examples for school work.

### GENERAL EXERCISE.

"Frequent consideration of a thing wears off the strangeness of it; and shows it in its several lights and various ways of appearance, to the view of the mind."—SOUTH.

"Poetry is like shot-silk with many glancing colours. Every reader must find his own interpretation according to his ability, and according to his sympathy with the poet."—TENNYSON.

1. Show how the sound of these lines echoes their meaning :—

(a) "The shattering trumpet shrilleth high."

(b) "In cataract after cataract to the sea."

(c) "And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon."

2.

"A truth

Looks freshest in the fashion of the day."

In which poems does that embody Tennyson's method? What is the *truth* and what is the *fashion*?

3. Compare the meaning of *lowly* in these verses :—

(a) "Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted *lowly*."

(b) "How sweet (while warm airs hush us, blowing *lowly*).

4. Which poem seems to you to contain the deepest thought? Define that thought.

5. "Monologues are peculiarly adapted to a subjective or personal treatment; through the lips of his one character, the poet may safely express his own more daring opinions; and, when convenient, he may call his offending character to correction." Apply this to Tennyson's "Ulysses."

6. How does the dramatic monologue "Ulysses" differ from the monologue of Lawrence Aylmer with regard to the supposed audience?

7. Which poems "nerve a nation's heart?"

8. Which poems have a distinctly personal interest? Explain what it is.

9. Which poems are wholly autobiographic? Explain how.

10. Show that Tennyson's descriptions of nature are always scenic backgrounds and are always in keeping with the human figures that occupy the foreground.

11. Has Tennyson in these poems any description of nature apart from human interest?

12. Are his descriptions of nature intellectual or emotional? Exemplify.

13. Select three landscape pictures. Are they similar?

14. Select three portraits of people. Are those people rich or poor?

15. Which of the poems selected deal distinctly with the past, and which with the future? Support your judgment by definite quotations.

16. Does Tennyson seem to you optimistic? Quote to confirm or to refute.

17. Is Sir Galahad more attractive as ideal knight or as religious enthusiast? Why so?

18. Compare the religious types presented by Galahad and the nun in "St. Agnes' Eve."

19. Compare the ethics of "Break, Break, Break," and "Tears, Idle Tears," and contrast the ethics of those poems and that of "Ulysses."

20. Which poems are in blank verse and which are in rhimed verse?

21. In which are the rimes most difficult? Why?

22. Which poems are modern transcriptions of classic myths? Briefly outline those myths.

23. Classify the poems with regard to their themes. Consider the themes as domestic, romantic, or classic.

24. Which poem is suggested by—

“What is a man  
If his chief good and market of his time  
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more”?

25. Which poem seems to teach—

“’Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all”?

26. Which poems are likely to influence most widely and most wisely? Why?

27. Which poem do you think most imaginative? Why?

28. Thackeray said, “Tennyson is the wisest man I know.” What proof of Tennyson’s wisdom do these poems afford?

29. Which of these epithets are applicable to Tennyson’s style? Quote to illustrate:—imitative, reflective, spontaneous, creative, pictorial, musical, elaborate, erudite, ingenious, lucid, stately, simple, ornate.

30. Which poem has least to do with humanity? Why?

31. Illustrate Tennyson’s closeness of observation of natural phenomena.

32. “I asked Lady Tennyson for an explanation of ‘The Lady of Shalott,’ which has been so variously interpreted. She said that the original legend is in Italian, and that Tennyson only gave it as he found it, so that it is hardly fair to expect him to furnish an interpretation as well.”—LEWIS CARROLL. Write an original interpretation of the poem.

33. Which poems are remarkable for musical contrasts? Illustrate.

34. George Stewart said, “‘Break, Break, Break,’ is the loveliest lyric ever written.”

(a) What constitutes its loveliness?

(b) Is it lovelier than any of the lyrics from “The Princess”? How so?

35. Which poems contain thought in touch with the thought of the time? Exemplify.

36. “In ‘Of old sat Freedom on the heights’ and ‘Love thou thy land,’ we find as much of the old man’s caution as of the young man’s enthusiasm, but the principles and sentiments are those of one who had not watched in vain the dawn

of that struggle for reform and fuller liberty which synchronized with the birth of new realms in both east and west."—  
 READE.

- (a) Exemplify "the old man's caution."
- (b) Select instances of "the young man's enthusiasm."
- (c) What were the "principles and sentiments?"

37. What are the lines that express the most manly philosophy in the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington?"

38. Illustrate Tennyson's pictorial power in (a) words, (b) phrases, (c) lines, (d) stanzas, (e) poems.

39. "The relation between the members of a compound is expressed in one of these ways: either (1) by their relative position, as in the difference between pathfield, racehorse, and fieldpath, horserace; or (2) by an inflection of one of the parts, as in subtle-cadenced; or (3) by the intervention of a symbolic word, as in man-of-war, bread-and-cheese. The first and third are the methods in greatest vogue, the second is rather literary."—EARLE.

(a) Make a list of all compounds in these selected poems of Tennyson.

(b) Classify them as indicated above.

(c) How many alliterative compounds do you find?

40. "Two short poems of an extraordinary strength and majesty were written at this time: one would have thought that they had been written at a maturer period; but, if I remember right, they were suggested by some popular demonstrations connected with the Reform Bill of 1832, and its rejection by the House of Lords. Their political teaching shows that, when but twenty-three years of age, Tennyson's love of Liberty, which at all periods so strongly characterized his poetry, was accompanied by an equally strong conviction that Liberty must ever be a Moral Power beginning upon the spiritual 'heights' of wisdom, mutual respect, and self-control; and that no despotism could be more fatal than that tyranny of a majority in which alone a material omnipotence is united with a legal one. These two poems begin respectively with the lines: 'You ask me, why, tho' ill at ease,' and 'Of old sat Freedom on the heights.' Their massive grandeur results mainly from their brevity, and the austere simplicity of their

diction, which belongs to what has sometimes been called the 'lapidary' style. Each might indeed have been carved upon the entablature of a temple; and I remember hearing an aged statesman exclaim that they reminded him of what he had felt when, driving across the lonely plain of Paestum, he found himself confronted by its two temples. Their power consists largely in that perfection of poetic form with which each of them is invested. In this respect they may be profitably contrasted with a third poem which begins 'Love thou thy land, with love far-brought.' In thought and imagination that poem is equal to the former two; yet it bears no comparison with them as regards weight and effectiveness, because the same perfection of form was forbidden to it by the extent and the complexity of its theme. It could not have been caused by want of pains on the part of the poet."—A. DE VERE.

(a) Tabulate the statements made in this criticism

(b) Confirm or refute each point by direct reference to the poems.

41. Select any three details in the song of the brook to exemplify what picturesqueness in language means.

42. Supply the missing words in—

"They saw the —— river seaward flow  
From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops  
Three —— pinnacles of —— snow,  
Stood sunset-flushed: and, —— with —— drops,  
Up-clomb the —— pine above the —— copse."

43. "The Lotos-Eaters" is not more admirable for its beauty than for its unity; everywhere the luxuriously lovely scenery corresponds with the voluptuous sentiment; though voluptuous only in the way of enervate thought, not of passion." Illustrate by exact reference to the poem.

44. "I remember the poet's pointing out to me the improvement effected later by the introduction of the last paragraph setting forth the Lucretian Philosophy respecting the Gods, their aloofness from all human interests and elevated action, an Epicurean and therefore hard-hearted repose, sweetened not troubled by the endless wail from the earth. The sudden change of metre in the last paragraph has a highly artistic

effect, that of throwing the bulk of the poem as it were into a remote distance."

- (a) Quote the lines.
- (b) Where does the metre change?
- (c) Explain the change.

45. Contrast "The Lotos-Eaters" and "Ulysses" as to the moral lesson each inculcates.

46. "Ulysses" first convinced Carlyle that "Tennyson was a true poet." What in "Ulysses" likely influenced Carlyle?

47. "Tennyson's rule for writing participles in *ed* was to retain the vowel when it formed part of the verb; to put the apostrophe in all other cases, unless the *e* was sounded *metri gratia*, when it should be accented." Illustrate from his poems.

48. "The English public think that blank verse is the easiest thing in the world to write, mere prose cut up into five-foot lines; whereas it is one of the most difficult. In a blank verse you can have from three up to eight beats; but, if you vary the beats unusually, your ordinary newspaper critic sets up a howl. The varying of the beats, of the construction of the feet, of the emphasis, of the extra-metrical syllables and of the pauses, helps to make the greatness of blank verse. There are many other things besides; for instance, a fine ear for vowel-sounds, and the kicking of the geese out of the boat [*i.e.* doing away with sibilations]; but few educated men really understand the structure of blank verse. I never, if possible, put two 'ss' together in any verse of mine. My line is not, as first misprinted and often misquoted,—

And freedom broadens slowly down—

but

And freedom slowly broadens down.

People sometimes say how 'studied alliterative' Tennyson's verse is. Why, when I spout my lines first, they come out so alliteratively that I have sometimes no end of trouble to get rid of the alliteration."—TENNYSON.

- (a) Examine "Ulysses," to note the excellence of its blank verse.
- (b) Does your edition print Tennyson's line correctly?
- (c) Can you find any instance of two "ss"?



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49. What impression has the study of Tennyson's poems left on you with regard to—

- (a) Beauty of sound ;
- (b) Power of form ;
- (c) Picturesque power ;
- (d) Loveliness of thought ;
- (e) Power of thought ;
- (f) Truth ;
- (g) Idealization ;
- (h) Novelty ;
- (i) Artistic skill ?

Quote to accentuate your judgments.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

- 1809 (Aug. 6) — Alfred Tennyson born at Somersby.  
1827—*Poems by Two Brothers*.  
1828 (Oct. 28)—Enters Trinity College, Cambridge.  
1831—Left Cambridge. His father died.  
1833 (Sept. 13)—A. Hallam died at Vienna.  
1837—The Tennysons leave Somersby.  
1845—Receives a pension of £200.  
1847—"The Princess" published.  
1850—"In Memoriam" published.  
    " (June 13)—Married Emily Sellwood.  
    " —Was made Poet Laureate.  
1853—Removes to Farringford, Freshwater.  
1855 (May)—Receives the degree of D. C. L. at Oxford.  
1865 (Feb. 21)—His mother died.  
1867—Purchases Aldworth Estate, Sussex.  
1869—Elected an Hon. Fellow of Trin. Coll. Camb.  
1881—Raised to the Peerage as Baron of Aldworth and Farringford.  
1892 (Oct. 6)—Died at Aldworth.  
    " (Oct. 12)—Buried in Westminster Abbey.

## WORKS OF REFERENCE.

The Tennyson bibliography is already very large and we have not reached the end of book-making on his life and poetry. The following short list will perhaps meet all the requirements of those for whom these Selections from Tennyson are prepared, and the works named should be within reach of all teachers and students. The first two works named are, we may say, *essential to the study*, and no one can afford to do without them.

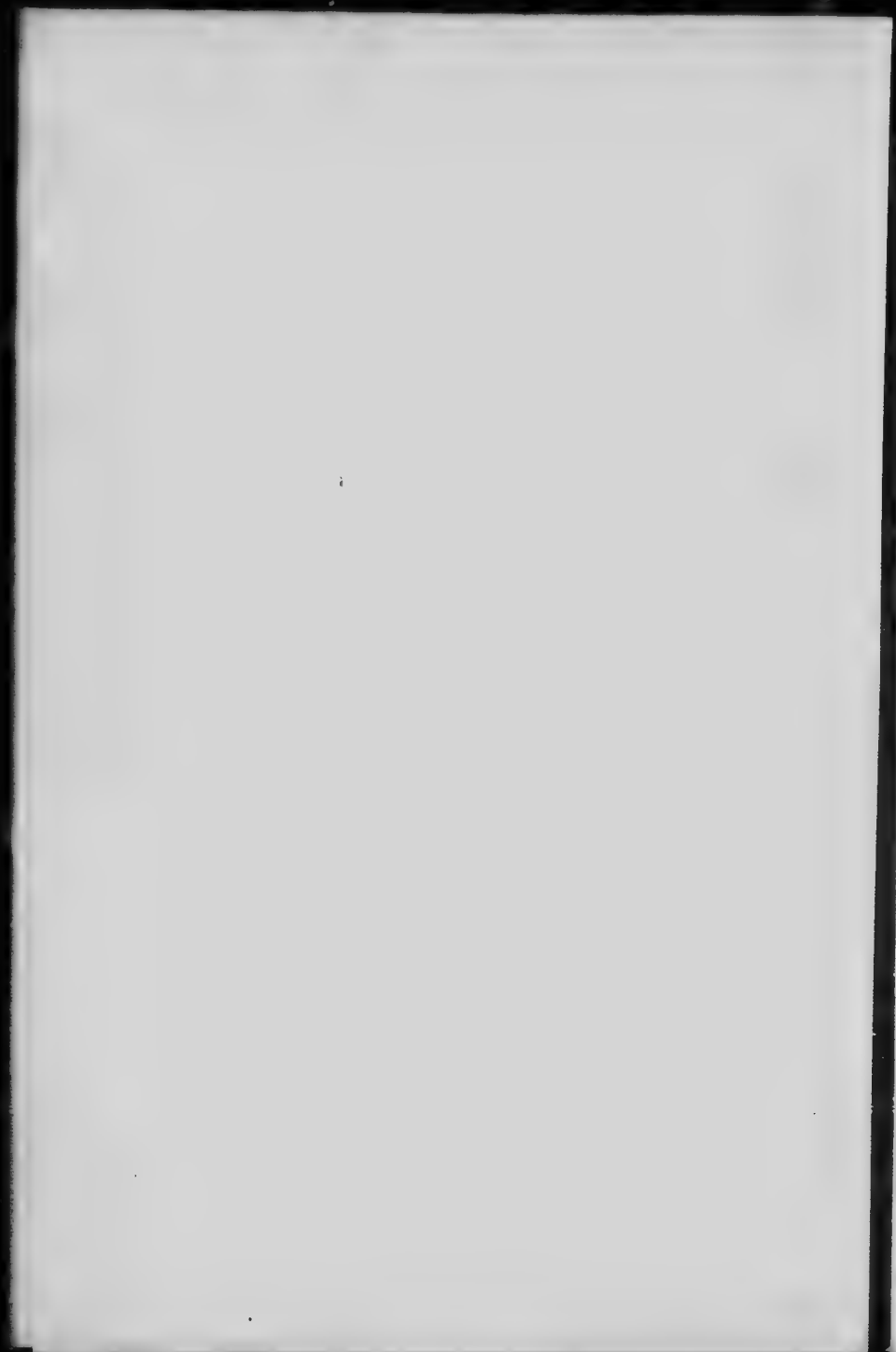
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON : A MEMOIR BY HIS SON. Published by Macmillans, London and New York.

TENNYSON : HIS ART AND RELATION TO MODERN LIFE. By Stopford A. Brooke. Published by Isister, London.

HANDBOOK TO TENNYSON'S WORKS. By Morton Luce. Published by G. Bell & Sons, London.

THE POETRY OF TENNYSON. By Henry Van Dyke. Published by Scribner's Sons, New York.

TENNYSON AS A RELIGIOUS TEACHER. By C. F. G. Masterman. Published by Methuen, London.



SUPPLEMENT

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SELECTIONS FROM "IN MEMORIAM"



CLEVEDON CHURCH,  
THE BURIAL PLACE OF ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM.

. . . . . O to us,  
 The fools of habit, sweeter seems  
 To rest beneath the clover sod,  
 That takes the sunshine and the rains,  
 Or where the kneeling hamlet drains  
 The chalice of the grapes of God.

. . . . .  
 'Tis well ; 'tis something ; we may stand  
 Where he in English earth is laid,  
 And from his ashes may be made  
 The violet of his native land.

## INTRODUCTION

TO THE

"IN MEMORIAM" SELECTIONS.

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Tennyson's "In Memoriam," which is in some respects his greatest work, is a collection of poems first published in 1850, but written during the seventeen years between that date and 1833, when his friend Arthur Hallam died. The first poems were the spontaneous utterance of his thoughts and feelings under his great bereavement, written for the relief of his own heart, and not intended originally for publication. The next stage in the design of the work was reached when the author conceived the idea of building with his song a monument to the memory of his friend. Finally, the design matured into the purpose of giving to his fellow men whatever light and comfort had come to his own mind and heart in the time of his great darkness and sorrow. In this design Tennyson was true to his own theory of his art. "Poetry," said he, "should be the flower and fruit of a man's life, in whatever stage of it, to be a worthy offering to the world." And this offering of Tennyson's, the flower and fruit of his great sorrow, has gone out into all the world, bringing comfort to those who know like grief and loss. It is a new discharge of the Divine commission, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord."

Hallam Tennyson, the son and biographer of the poet laureate, says :—"It must be remembered," writes my father, "that this is a poem, not an actual biography. It is founded on our friendship, on the engagement of Arthur Hallam to my sister, on his sudden death, at Vienna, just before the time fixed for their marriage, and on his burial at Clevedon Church. The poem concludes with the marriage of my youngest sister Cecilia. It was meant to be a kind of *Divina Commedia*, ending with happiness. The sections were written at many different places, and as the phases of our intercourse came to my memory and suggested them. I did not write them with any view of weaving them into a whole, or for publication, until I found that I had written so many. The

different moods of sorrow as in a drama are dramatically given, and my conviction that fear, doubts, and suffering will find answer and relief only through faith in a God of Love. "I" is not always the author speaking for himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him. After the death of A. H. H., the divisions of the poem are made by First Xmas Eve (section XXVIII.), Second Xmas (LXXVIII.), Third Xmas Eve (CIV. and CV. etc.) . . . . .

"As for the metre of "In Memoriam," I had no notion till 1880 that Lord Herbert of Cherbury had written his occasional verses in the same metre. I believed myself the originator of the metre, until after "In Memoriam" came out, when some one told me that Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney had used it."

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## IN MEMORIAM.

### I.

I held it truth, with him who sings  
     To one clear harp in divers tones,  
     That men may rise on stepping-stones  
 Of their dead selves to higher things.

But who shall so forecast the years  
     And find in loss a gain to match?  
     Or reach a hand thro' time to catch  
 The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drown'd,  
     Let darkness keep her raven gloss:  
     Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,  
 To dance with death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn  
     The long result of love, and boast,  
     'Behold the man that loved and lost,  
 But all he was is overworn.'



## III.

O Sorrow, cruel fellowship,  
O Priestess in the vaults of Death,  
O sweet and bitter in a breath,  
What whispers from thy lying lip?

'The stars,' she whispers, 'blindly run;  
A web is wov'n across the sky;  
From out waste places comes a cry,  
And murmurs from the dying sun:

'And all the phantom, Nature, stands—  
With all the music in her tone,  
A hollow echo of my own,—  
A hollow form with empty hands.'

And shall I take a thing so blind,  
Embrace her as my natural good;  
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,  
Upon the threshold of the mind?

## XXVIII.

The time draws near the birth of Christ:  
The moon is hid; the night is still;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and moor,  
Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound:

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate, and now decrease,  
Peace and goodwill, goodwill and peace,  
Peace and goodwill, to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wish'd no more to wake,  
And that my hold on life would break  
Before I heard those bells again:

But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controll'd me when a boy ;  
They bring me sorrow touch'd with joy,  
The merry merry bells of Yule.

## XXXIII.

O thou that after toil and storm  
Mayst seem to have reach'd a purer air,  
Whose faith has centre everywhere,  
Nor cares to fix itself to form.

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,  
Her early Heaven, her happy views ;  
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse  
A life that leads melodious days.

Her faith thro' form is pure as thine,  
Her hands are quicker unto good :  
Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood  
To which she links a truth divine !

See thou, that countest reason ripe  
In holding by the law within,  
Thou fail not in a world of sin,  
And ev'n for want of such a type.

## XXXVI.

Tho' truths in manhood darkly join,  
Deep-seated in our mystic frame,  
We yield all blessing to the name  
Of Him that made them current coin ;

For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,  
Where truth in closest words shall fail,  
When truth embodied in a tale  
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

And so the Word had breath, and wrought  
With human hands the creed of creeds  
In loveliness of perfect deeds,  
More strong than all poetic thought ;

Which he may read that binds the sheaf,  
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,  
And those wild eyes that watch the wave  
In roarings round the coral reef.

## LXXXVI.

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,  
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom  
Of evening over brake and bloom  
And meadow, slowly breathing bare  
The round of space, and rapt below  
Thro' all the dewy-tassell'd wood,  
And shadowing down the horned flood  
In pulses, fan my brows and blow  
The fever from my cheek, and sigh  
The full new life that feeds thy breath  
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and Death,  
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly  
From belt to belt of crimson seas  
On leagues of odour streaming far,  
To where in yonder orient star  
A hundred spirits whisper 'Peace.'

## LXXXVII.

I past beside the reverend walls  
In which of old I wore the gown;  
I roved at random thro' the town,  
And saw the tumult of the halls;  
And heard once more in college fanes  
The storm their high-built organs make,  
A loud thunder-music, rolling, shake  
The prophet blazon'd on the panes;  
And caught once more the distant shout,  
The measured pulse of racing oars  
Among the willows; paced the shores  
And many a bridge, and all about

The same gray flats again, and felt  
The same, but not the same ; and last  
Up that long walk of limes I past  
To see the rooms in which he dwelt.

Another name was on the door :  
I linger'd ; all within was noise  
Of songs, and clapping hands, and boys  
That crash'd the glass and beat the floor ;

Where once we held debate, a band  
Of youthful friends, on mind and art,  
And labour, and the changing mart,  
And all the framework of the land ;

When one would aim an arrow fair,  
But send it slackly from the string ;  
And one would pierce an outer ring,  
And one an inner, here and there ;

And last the master-bowman, he,  
Would cleave the mark. A willing car  
We lent him. Who, but hung to hear  
The rapt oration flowing free

From point to point, with power and grace  
And music in the bounds of law,  
To those conclusions when we saw  
The God within him light his face,

And seem to lift the form, and glow  
In azure orbits heavenly-wise ;  
And over those ethereal eyes  
The bar of Michael Angelo.

XCVI.

You say, but with no touch of scorn,  
Sweet-hearted, you, whose light-blue eyes  
Are tender over drowning flies,  
You tell me, doubt is Devil-born.

I know not: one indeed I knew  
In many a subtle question versed,  
Who touch'd a jarring lyre at first,  
But ever strove to make it true:

Perplex'd in faith, but pure in deeds,  
At last he beat his music out.  
There lives more faith in honest doubt,  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gather'd strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind,  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own;  
And Power was with him in the night,  
Which makes the darkness and the light,  
And dwells not in the light alone,

But in the darkness and the cloud,  
As over Sinai's peaks of old,  
While Israel made their gods of gold,  
Altho' the trumpet blew so loud.

## CX.

Thy converse drew us with delight,  
The men of rathe and riper years:  
The feeble soul, a haunt of fears,  
Forgot his weakness in thy sight.

On thee the loyal-hearted hung,  
The proud was half disarm'd of pride,  
Nor eared the serpent at thy side  
To flicker with his double tongue.

The stern were mild when thou wert by,  
The flippant put himself to school  
And heard thee, and the brazen fool  
Was soften'd, and he knew not why;

While I, thy nearest, sat apart,  
And felt thy triumph was as mine;  
And loved them more, that they were thine,  
The graceful tact, the Christian art;

Nor mine the sweetness or the skill,  
But mine the love that will not tire,  
And, born of love, the vague desire  
That spurs an imitative will.

## CXI.

The churl in spirit, up or down  
Along the scale of ranks, thro' all,  
To him who grasps a golden ball,  
By blood a king, at heart a clown;

The churl in spirit, howe'er he veil  
His want in forms for fashion's sake,  
Will let his coltish nature break  
At seasons thro' the gilded pale:

For who can always act? but he,  
To whom a thousand memories call,  
Not being less but more than all  
The gentleness he seem'd to be,

Best seem'd the thing he was, and join'd  
Each office of the social hour  
To noble manners, as the flower  
And native growth of noble mind;

Nor ever narrowness or spite,  
Or villain fancy fleeting by,  
Drew in the expression of an eye,  
Where God and Nature met in light;

And thus he bore without abuse  
The grand old name of gentleman,  
Defamed by every charlatan,  
And soil'd with all ignoble use.

## CXXIV.

That which we dare invoke to bless;  
Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;  
He, They, One, All; within, without;  
The Power in darkness whom we guess;

I found Him not in world or sun,  
Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye;  
Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
The petty cobwebs we have spun;

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,  
I heard a voice 'believe no more'  
And heard an ever-breaking shore  
That tumbled in the Godless deep;

A warmth within the breast would melt  
The freezing reason's colder part,  
And like a man in wrath the heart  
Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear;  
But that blind clamour made me wise;  
Then was I as a child that cries,  
But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again  
What is, and no man understands;  
And out of darkness came the hands  
That reach thro' nature, moulding men.

.....  
A soul shall draw from out the vast  
And strike his being into bounds,

And, moved thro' life of lower phase,  
Result in man, be born and think,  
And act and love, a closer link  
Betwixt us and the crowning race

Of those that, eye to eye, shall look  
     On knowledge; under whose command  
     Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand  
 Is Nature like an open book;  
 No longer half-akin to brute,  
     For all we thought and loved and did,  
     And hoped, and suffer'd, is but seed  
 Of what in them is flower and fruit;  
 Whereof the man, that with me trod  
     This planet, was a noble type  
     Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
 That friend of mine who lives in God,  
 That God, which ever lives and loves,  
     One God, one law, one element,  
     And one far-off divine event,  
 To which the whole creation moves.

## NOTES TO "IN MEMORIAM."

## I.

I held it truth, &c. It may be true, as a general thing, that men's experiences help them to a higher life, but can there be any compensation for the loss of the noblest and dearest friend? The answer is that, even at the price of grief and loss, Love is to be prized and cherished.

Him who sings. Strange to say, Tennyson forgot the particular literary allusion in this passage. When asked about it, he said, "I believe I alluded to Goethe. Among his last words were those: 'Von Aenderungen zu höheren Aenderungen,'—from changes to higher changes."

The words of St. Augustine, on which Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine" is based, refer not to the sorrows but to the sins of men. "*De vitis nostris scalam nobis faciemus, si vitia ipsa calcamus.*"

## III.

The broodings and fancies of sorrow are morbid and false, and should be resisted.

Compare with this the old Hebrew poet:—"Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath He shut up His tender mercies?"



And I said, 'This is my infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High.'—Psalm lxxvii. 9-10.

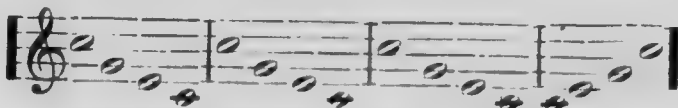
## XXVIII.

This describes the first Christmas after the bereavement. The reader should compare it with the other Christmas scenes as given in LXXVIII. and CIV. and CV., noting the changes of atmosphere, environment, and disposition of mind.

**Four voices of four hamlets.** In Rawnsley's "Memories of the Tennysons," pp. 11-12, is the following account of a conversation between the author and an old man at Somersby

"What peal of bells do you hear best here on a Christmas night, if the night is still?" His answer was, "Oh, that's soon sattu'd, theer's nobbut four downrighters wi'in reeëch, as ye maäy säy, for Spilsby and Halton's ower far hof—we can hear em at times when the wind's reight. The bells we moöstlins consider to hear is Tetford, Hagg, Langton and Ormsby. Ormsby's tother side o' the hill, but theer's a deäl o' watter abowt and fwoaks, aes watter's good for bells, howiver Ormsby's are real good uns to hear, I'll warnt them."

**Each voice four changes.** Each village church had a peal of four bells. These bells, if sounding the first, third, fifth and eighth, would give the chime thus:—



## XXXIII

A mind of extraordinary grasp and insight may hold to faith without the forms of faith, such as creed, or rite, or church, but the common mind finds help in the forms, and may even know the purest, deepest spiritual life, though not of the highest intellectual type.

Thomas Carlyle was one of Tennyson's intimate friends. He held as he believed to the essence of the faith, but he held very loosely to all forms, and he was not always able to sympathize with minds less vigorous and militant than his own.

## XXXVI.

Hallam Tennyson tells us in the *LIFE*, page 272, "When questions were written to him about Christ, he would say to me: 'Answer for me that I have given my belief in "*In Memoriam*."'" In a note to this passage in the *LIFE*, we are referred to this Canto of the "*In Memoriam*."

**Tho' truths in manhood darkly join, etc.** Though the essential truths may be involved in our deepest spiritual intuitions, they are not available to mankind at large, but are like precious ore, hidden in the earth. In the Gospel of Jesus and in His character and life, these truths are brought to light and made clear to the humblest of men, to peasants, artisans, labourers, and even to the untutored South Sea Islanders.

## LXXXVI.

This Canto presents a good example of Tennyson's descriptions of Nature, and also exhibits his mastery of the peculiar metre in which the "*In Memoriam*" is written. There is no pause between the stanzas, and the whole Canto is one sentence.

**The horned flood.** This is a literal translation of the Latin "*Corniger fluvius*," applied by Virgil (*Æn.* viii. 77) to the River Tiber. In classic mythology the river-god Achelous was said to be horned, and he is the type of all gods of rivers. This use of a somewhat obscure classical allusion in an English poem for general readers can scarcely be called an excellence; it is rather an intrusion.

## LXXXVII.

In this Canto Tennyson describes a visit to his academic home, Trinity College, Cambridge, and revives the memories of his college days and of his friend Hallam.

**high-built organs.** The organs built above the screen between the choir and nave.

**The prophet blazon'd on the panes.** This refers to the stained-glass windows and perhaps particularly to those of King's College Chapel.

**on mind and art and labour, etc.** Here the language of the poet gives an air and charm of novelty to what in plain prose we call philosophy, the fine arts, capital and labour, free trade, Reform Bill, etc.

**The God within him light his face.** In several passages Tennyson tries to describe the characteristic expression of Hallam's face and eyes. Compare the "azure orbits heavenly wise," and "those ethereal eyes" of the next stanza. Compare also "the sweetest soul, that ever looked from human eyes" (LVII.), and "the expression of an eye, where God and Nature met in light" (CXI.).

**The bar of Michael Angelo.** In Michael Angelo the frontal bone was very prominent, and made a broad bar across the forehead over the eyes.

## XCVI.

This Canto gives Tennyson's thoughts on doubt and faith. There are no two lines from the "In Memoriam" more frequently quoted and more commonly misunderstood and misapplied than the lines from this poem:

"There lives more faith in honest doubt  
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

These lines, out from the context, are often quoted in praise of doubt, whereas the clear meaning of the whole poem is the praise of the just thought and pure heart and loyal, honest purpose that can face and solve the doubts and difficulties that confront every inquiring mind. Provisional doubt is necessary as a means to assured conviction and strength, but, as an end, doubt is darkness and weakness.

Compare other descriptions of the quality and attitude of mind that were admired in Tennyson's revered friend:—

"The faith, the vigour, bold to dwell  
On doubts that drive the coward back."

(xcv. 8.)

"Scruple intellect and force  
To seize and throw the doubts of man."

(cix. 2.)

**Which makes the darkness, etc.** "The day is thine, the night also is thine, thou hast prepared the light and the sun."—Ps. lxxiv. 16. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."—Ps. cxxxix. 12.

**Israel made their gods of gold.** See Exodus xix. 16-19.

CIX.

This Canto and the two following Cantos give some particular account of Tennyson's friend. His intellectual and emotional qualities are first described. The reader should note each feature presented, the wide information and generous sympathy shown in his conversation, his critical acumen, the brilliance and strength of his intellect, his eloquence, his enthusiasm, etc., etc.

CX.

This poem deals chiefly with Hallam's influence on others.

**rathe and riper years, i.e.,** both young and old. *Rathe* is an old word, the positive of our common word *rather*.

**Nor mine the sweetness or the skill.** Tennyson knew his fault; he was not good company except with chosen friends; with strangers he was reserved or morose, and some people said even rude.

CXI.

This poem is descriptive of Hallam's manners and his bearing towards others

**a golden ball, the emblem of rule.**

**gentleness.** Here used in the old sense of *good breeding*.

**villain, vulgar, base.**

## CXXIV.

Logic or the Discursive Reason cannot prove a God or define Him, but the Heart, the Intuitive Reason, demands a God. . . . God can neither be proved nor disproved, but in all the forms of faith, the soul of man calls out for God, and to God, however he be named, "He, They, One, All." This relation must remain constant between the finite spirit and the Infinite and Eternal in whom we live and move and have our being. It was true in ancient as in modern times, "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps. lili. 1), and it is true to-day as it was of old time, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God"—Ps. xlii. 2.

I found Him not in world or sun, etc. The argument from design, the teleological argument, is not conclusive and satisfactory. And, if proved, Design is not what the heart demands.

The questions men may try, metaphysical arguments.

What I am, etc. The *Ego*, the whole self-conscious intelligence, and not merely the logical faculty.

What is, etc. The *Non-Ego*, the universe in which we are placed, with all the experiences it brings and the reactions it produces in the mind and heart.

Out of darkness . . . . moulding men. The fearful child is comforted in the dark night by the voice or touch of the father whom he cannot see.

"God is with us now on this down, as we two are walking together, just as truly as Christ was with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. We cannot see Him, but He, the Father and Saviour of the spirit, is nearer perhaps now than then, to those who are not afraid to believe the words of the apostles about the actual and real presence of God and his Christ with all who yearn for it.' I said I thought that such a near actual presence would be awful to most people. 'Surely the love of God takes away and makes us forget all our fear,' he answered. 'I should be sorely afraid to live my life without God's presence; and to feel that He is by my side, just as much as you are, that is the very joy of my heart.' And I looked on Tennyson as he spoke, and the glory of God rested upon his face, and

I felt that the presence of the Most High had indeed overshadowed him."—AGNES GRACE WELD, in *Contemp. Review*, Nov. 1897.

## EPILOGUE.

These stanzas, the last of the Epilogue, give us Tennyson's view of Evolution and of the Descent and Ascent of Man. Before the publishing of Darwin's great work on Evolution, Tennyson had studied and accepted in its main outlines the teaching that is now known as Evolution.

**A soul shall draw from out the vast.** By the terms *the vast, the deep*, is meant the Infinite and Eternal Source of life and all things. . . . In the "De Profundis" he speaks of birth as a coming

" Out of the deep,  
From that true world within the world we see  
Whereof our world is but the bounding shore."

And in "Crossing the Bar" he speaks of death as the time

" When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home."

**moved through life of lower phase.** This accepts the teaching of biologists, who say that in its ante-natal life the human embryo recapitulates the lower forms of life.

**The crowning race.** The course of evolution is not yet run. As the best developed types of men to-day are superior to the lowest savage types, so the men of the future will rise above the best of the present.

**That friend of mine who lives in God.** This is, according to Tennyson, the grand consummation of human evolution, the end "to which the whole creation moves." But it is not the absorption and extinction of the Self in the General Soul. (See XLVII.) It is rather the completion of what the apostle describes as being "filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. iii. 19), and the realization of the Redeemer's prayer, "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."—St. John xvii. 21.

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